FBIS DAILY REPORT

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ARAB LEAGUE REPRESENTATIVES TO MEET 27 MARCH

JN231507Y Amman JNA in Arabic 1432 GMT 23 Mar 78 JN

[Text] Cairo, 23 March--The permanent representatives of the Arab League will hold a meeting on Monday prior to the Arab League Council session, which begins on the same day. Secretary General Mahmud Riyad has said that he called this meeting to prepare for the council session and to review the items on the agenda. The council will discuss several topics, including Arab solidarity.

HAWATIMAH CALLS ON IRAQ TO JOIN STEADFASTNESS FRONT

JN231427Y Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1215 GMT 23 Mar 78 JN

[Text] Kuwait--Nayif Hawatimah, secretary general of the Democratic Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine [DPFLP], has lauded the role played by the front of steadfastness and confrontation concerning the fateful issues of the Arab nation. In a statement published by the Kuwaiti newspaper AR-RA'Y AL-'AMM, Hawatimah called on the PLO and the nationalist Arab forces to join the front of steadfastness to confront the capitulatory plans of Carter, Begin and As-Sadat. Hawatimah called on Iraq to join the front of steadfastness. He said Iraq must prove the seriousness of the slogans it is raising by joining this front and not remaining outside its framework.

PRAGUE PAPER INTERVIEWS QADDUMI ON MIDEAST ISSUES

AU210922Y Prague RUDE PRAVO in Czech 17 Mar 78 p 7 AU

[Interview given by Faruq Qaddumi, head of the PLO Political Department, to Stanislav Stepanek]

[Text] A PLO delegation is now visiting Czechoslovakia. We took this opportunity to interview the delegation head, Faruq Qaddumi, head of the PLO Political Department.

Question: In the last few hours reports have been coming from Lebanon about an extensive Israeli aggression and the bombing of Palestinian camps. Israeli Minister Weizman has even stated that the Israeli troops would remain in Lebanon for as long as it takes them to "cleanse" this area "from Palestinian contamination" once and for all. How do you appraise this new Israeli act of aggression?

Answer: In the first place, it must be said that the latest Israeli aggression is an action that had been prepared for a long time, and well, for the several past months the Israelis had been assembling and concentrating their units in the area of the northern Arab occupied territories, undertaking sporadic sallies against individual Lebanese villages in the south. At the same time their heavy artillery was bombarding areas and towns situated farther away from the borders. The aggression was foreshadowed by a less extensive action undertaken a few months ago when Israeli units invaded the interior of Lebanon, stayed there for several days and then withdrew again.

Although Israel declares that it supports a peace-loving policy, its real intentions are the very opposite of peaceloving.

It is is also clear that the United States has welcomed this new aggression and that it supports it. The main U.S. goal is to make the individual Arab states agree to separate negotiations with Israel, as As-Sadat did.

Thus, Israel continues its aggressive policy and ignores, contrary to the world public opinion, the UN decision. This is not surprising, since it is being managed by the well-known terrorist Begin, who massacred the Dayr Yasin inhabitants 30 years ago.

Question: The implementation of the legitimate rights of the Arab people of Palestine is one of the main obstacles preventing agreement between As-Sadat and Begin. Several of Anwar as-Sadat's recent speeches have testified to the fact that he would like to circumvent the Palestinian question. From this viewpoint how does the PLO appraise the provocative action by the Egyptian commandos at Larnaca airport?

Answer: In the first place it must be said that As-Sadat has agreed to a capitulatory policy, which is harming the interests of the Arab people. This is also the goal pursued by American imperialism and world Zionism: They have been concerned with splitting Arab unity and shifting the situation to the level of bilateral negotiations between the Arab states and Israel.

By making the trip to Jerusalem, As-Sadat showed all his cards and renounced everything, without gaining anything in return. By making the trip he actually recognized Israel, simultaneously declared the end of the state of war and--in a situation when Arab territory was occupied--began establishing normal diplomatic contacts with Israel.

He has also thwarted the possibility of holding the Geneva conference prepared by the two largest powers--that is, by the Soviet Union and the United States--and in his speech in the Israeli Knesset he in fact ignored the PLO as the only legitimate representative of the Arab people of Palestine. In the same way, the Egyptian president gave up the demand to establish an independent Palestinian state in his negotiations with President Carter in Aswan.

There is much evidence that As-Sadat's real intention in the Egyptian commando action in Larnaca was to destroy the entire plane, including the hostages. This would have made it possible to eliminate three top Palestinian representatives. The two Egyptian representatives who were among the hostages were representatives of the progressive forces rejecting As-Sadat's policy. At the same time, had the aircraft been destroyed, this action could definitely have been hidden and nobody would have ever known who had been behind it. Egypt outwitted the Cypriot authorities by asking for permission to land under the pretext that there was a ministerial delegation on board the plane.

The purpose of this action at Larnaca airport was to damage the PLO reputation among the world public.

Question: You have mentioned As-Sadat's initiative and his trip to Israel. Due to this action by the Egyptian president new aspects have arisen in the Mideast crisis. A so-called rejectionist front was set up at the Tripoli meeting. What are the PLO's position and goals in this front and what are its views on President as-Sadat's separate negotiations in the overall context of the present developments?

Answer: The front of steadfastness and rejection was created to express the Arab states' opposition [odpor] to As-Sadat's policy. It was necessary to create a firm front capable of eliminating the negative results of As-Sadat's trip and of consolidating Arab unity among the honest and progressive forces against Israeli aggression. The front of steadfastness and rejection has clearly defined its friends and its enemies and has also formulated its aims: to regain the lost balance of forces in the Middle East which had been violated by As-Sadat's policy in the service of American imperialism in the Arab sphere. Carter led As-Sadat to visit Jerusalem.

He was thus aiming to thwart the international endeavors to convene the peace conference and show that he is not interested in having this conference take place, that he is not interested in the Soviet Union's participation in such a conference. Carter is striving to destroy the friendship between progressive Arab countries and socialist countries. He is striving to have the PLO ignored and excluded from any and all international negotiations.

Question: How are the establishment and activity of the front of resistance concretely manifested?

Answer: The primary result is the support of the main countries, of the forces participating in the confrontation with Israel--of Syria and the PLO. It is political, military and material support. The front wants to tip the balance of forces in favor of the progressive Arab forces and to insure a just solution. It also wants to prove to the world that peace will not be established as long as the Israelis do not withdraw from all occupied territories and as long as the Palestinians are not able to create their own state.

Question: You have already mentioned U.S. President Carter's intentions. What do you think of the current plans of American imperialism in this area and of its new tactics--to rely not only on Israel, but also on certain Arab countries, for instance Egypt?

Answer: The purpose of American policy is to consolidate its influence and anchor the positions of American monopolies and to open the road toward the Arab natural riches, primarily oil. Furthermore, the United States is striving to change the progressive Arab regimes and to set up pro-American governments there. Last but not least, it is striving to liquidate the Palestinian revoltuion and the PLO. The United States is most concerned with transferring the conflicts to individual Arab states, so that certain Arab regimes would defend the interests of American imperialism it is striving to push through partial solutions, that is, separate treaties that would support Israel's expansionist and aggressive policy. The purpose is to exclude the Soviet Union from the solution of the Mideast crisis, to consolidate the existence of Israel and to make the Israeli occupation of Arab territories legitimate.

Prague TV Interview

LD180017Y Prague Domestic Television Service in Czech and Slovak 1800 GMT 17 Mar 78 LD

[Interview granted by Faruq Qaddumi, head of the PLO Political Department, to unidentified CSSR television announcer, during 15-17 March visit to CSSR--recorded, Qaddumi speaks in English fading into Czech translation]

[Text] [Question] At the beginning of our interview, a question which is most topical, a question on the situation in southern Lebanon. Do you think that this Israeli aggression is the solution to the problem of Palestine proclaimed by Prime Minister Begin?

[Answer] Begin's government had the intention many times to carry out aggression in southern Lebanon. The true essence, the reason, for such an action is the fact that the Palestinians in southern Lebanon simply were there. Begin is a terrorist, and, as is known from his terorist past, he has always intended to exterminate the Palestinians. As we say, Begin's history begins with the massacre in the village of Dayr Yasin, which Begin ordered exactly 30 years ago. He tries to solve the Palestinian problem by massacring Palestinians and by razing southern Lebanese villages. But he cannot succeed. He is a fascist, or, rather, a neofascist. The way the Nazis tortured the Jews during World War II should be a warning of how not to deal with people. But Begin, on the contrary, learned from the Nazis, his enemies, how best to carry out terrorist attacks, how to massacre people, how to liquidate human beings.

Mr Begin obstinately ignores the national rights of the Arab people of the Palestine and, by intending to join to Israel the West Bank of the Jordan and the Gaza Strip, he makes it obvious to the whole world that, in fact, he does not want peace. And he does not strive for peace. And so he builds new Israeli settlements, rejects any sort of independence of the Palestinian people, rejects any peaceful solution to the problem.

[Question] In this connection, when Israel occupies southern Lebanon, no doubt the standpoint of Egypt is of interest. President as-Sadat, for instance, stated yesterday that his separate negotiations with Israel will continue, in spite of all obstacles. What do you think?

[Answer] Unfortunately, President as-Sadat still insists on his dangerous and suspect initiative. He gave the Israelis all that Tel Aviv wanted. He gave away all the trump cards. He recognized the Israeli State. He, in fact, put an end to the state of war, normalized Egytian-Israeli relations, rejected all international efforts aimed at peace as well as the Geneva peace conference and caused a split in the Arab world. In spite of these facts he received nothing in return, nothing which would at least have somehow balanced all his concessions to the Israeli Government. So, to achieve some sort of success, some sort of solution, he intended to make further concessions. He even wanted to give Israel a portion of Egyptian territory. I think that the continuation and maintenance of the initiative only increases As-Sadat's capitulatory attitude toward Israel, which has rejected all that As-Sadat has offered to it.

[Question] The American paper New York TIMES wrote today that certain circles in the United States have received the Israeli invasion into Lebanon with sympathy. How would you characterize the common American-Israeli objectives in the Middle East?

[Answer] President Carter was thought to be one of the strongest presidents of the United States. But as we have seen from experience it appears that he is one of the weakest. Under pressure from the Zionist lobby in the U.S. Congress, he broke all the promises and obligations the United States had made and which also stemmed from the joint Soviet-American statement on the Middle East last October. President Carter thus started to play a cold war game. He often made statements in which he gave assurances that he would conscientiously watch any violations of human rights anywhere in the world. The situation in the occupied Arab territories, where our people live in horrible conditions and without any human rights, he (?ignored) entirely. He probably still feels the old mentality of colonizers and conquerors. He is following his predecessors and, step by step, he returns to the policy pursued by Mr Kissinger, to break up the Arab world and change too the economic structure of individual Arab countries so that it fully corresponds to the interests and objectives of U.S. policy. That is why he favors a separate peace and partial agreements between Israel and the frontline Arab countries, that is why he overlooks the legal rights of the Palestinian people and that is why he is for Israel's expansionist and aggressive policy. He is so weak before the Zionist lobby that he is not able to develop any kind of pressure on Israel to withdraw forces from occupied Arab territories. This means that Mr Carter does nothing for peace and continues fully to support all Israel's objectives, including the construction of militarized settlements on Arab territory, and he thus is on the side of war and the continuation of Israeli aggression.

AS-SA'IQAH OFFICIAL RECEIVES VARIOUS AMBASSADORS

JN231431Y Damascus SANA in Arabic 1300 GMT 23 Mar 78 JN

[Text] Damascus, 23 March--Comrade Hasan 'Ajaj, deputy secretary of the General Command of the Vanguards of the Popular Liberation Forces and head of the Political Bureau of the As-Sa'iqah forces, has received the ambassadors of Cuba, Czechoslavakia, Yugoslavia, the GDR and Bulgaria in Damascus. During these meetings, a review was made of the nature of the stage through which the area is passing, especially after the Zionist aggression against southern Lebanon, which came as a cover for the total failure of the U.S.-As-Sadat policy in the region. This aggression also came to strengthen the fact often stressed by the [word indistinct] progressive forces, namely, that the conflict of the region cannot be solved through begging or falling in the lap of imperialism, but through armed struggle.

Comrade 'Ajaj then talked about the heroic role of the Palestinian revolution and the Lebanese nationalist forces in their confrontation of the Zionist enemy and praised the stands of the friendly countries which support the Palestinian people's struggle. The ambassadors affirmed their countries' support for the Arab people's cause and their denunciation of the Zionist aggression.

Comrade 'Ajaj also received an Eritrean Liberation Front delegation led by brother 'Abdallah Sulayman, head of the Foreign Relations Bureau. During the meeting, talks were held on the latest developments of the situation in the Horn of Africa. Comrade 'Ajaj praised the heroic role of the front as well as its just struggle to attain complete independence.

ALGERIAN AMBASSADOR SEES ABU IYAD, HABASH, HAWATIMAH

LD232025Y Algiers Domestic Service in Arabic 1900 GMT 23 Mar 78 LD

[Text] Mohamed Yazid, the Algerian ambassador to Lebanon, today conferred with three Palestinian leaders: Abu Iyad, member of the Central Council of Fatah; Dr George Habash, secretary general of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine; and Nayif Hawatimah, secretary general of the Democratic Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine. The talks dealt with developments of the situation, political coordination and military assistance for the Palestinian resistance. The three Palestinian leaders expressed to Mohamed Yazid their appreciation for the stand of Algeria and its help to the Palestinian resistance in various fields, especially in the military field, enabling it to stand up to Israeli aggression against southern Lebanon.

HUSAYN REPORTEDLY MEDIATES BETWEEN AL-ASAD, AS-SADAT

JN221452Y Manama GULF NEWS AGENCY in Arabic 1352 GMT 22 Mar 78 JN

[Text] Kuwait, 22 March--It was reported here today that Jordan's King Husayn is currently performing the role of mediator in an attempt to bring views closer between Egyptian President Anwar as-Sadat and Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad. This was published by the Kuwaiti newspaper AL-WATAN today. The paper said that the endeavors of the Jordanian monarch and his envoys' intensive contacts in this connection will bear fruit soon. Furthermore, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait are making endeavors in this connection.

Speaking about the lengthy meeting held between Egyptian and Syrian representatives to the United Nations, the paper says that during the meeting, they discussed the various political and military questions of interest to the two countries. The two sides blessed this meeting and regarded it as a positive step toward the restoration of normal Egyptian-Syrian relations.

AL-WATAN adds: A high-level Egyptian-Syrian meeting might take place in the next few days aimed at liquidating and cleansing the political climate between the two countries in view of the Israeli invasion of southern Lebanon. The papec affirms that the Israeli invasion of southern Lebanon was one of the factors which led to this rapprochement.

USSR SAID TO ADVISE SYRIA ON ISRAELI ATTACK

JN230853Y Doha QNA in Arabic 0802 GMT 23 Mar 78 JN

[Text] Kuwait, 23 March--In a dispatch from Amman, the Kuwaiti newspaper AR-RA'Y AL-'AMM reports that the Soviet Union has asked Syria not to intervene in the battles in southern Lebanon. Citing an official Jordanian source, the paper says that Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad has informed His Majesty King Husayn of Jordan of the contents of a message he received in this connection from Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev before the Israeli attack on southern Lebanon began.

The source said that the Soviet letter advises the Syrian leadership to exercise self-restraint and furnishes information about a trap set for Syria aimed at occupying all of Lebanon and then partitioning it as a solution.

Citing well-informed Jordanian sources, the paper also says that Jordan informed Syria of the beginning of the Israeli attack on the evening of 14 March, as well as of the size and movements of the Israeli forces in this connection.

The sources also told the paper that the Israeli air force set up an air guard for 1 hour on the Dimona nuclear reactor out of fear of a suicidal fedayeen strike. The Israeli calculations were based on the possibility that an air strike might come from planes said to be owned by the Palestinian resistance in Uganda and operated by Palestinian pilots.

QATARI-PALESTINIAN COMMITTEES COLLECT DONATIONS

JN211951Y Manama GULF NEWS AGENCY in Arabic 1820 GMT 21 Mar 78 JN

[Text] Doha, 21 March--The joint committees composed of members of the Qatari and the Palestinian Red Crescent societies today began their campaign to collect money and blood for the Palestinian revolution and the Lebanese people. Six committees are working in the various parts of Qatar, and the minimum amount of donation by individual donors has been fixed. The PLO office in Doha has held a meeting here in which the Palestinians attending the conference decided to donate 30 percent of their salaries in the interest of the revolution. The decision will be effective from 1 April and will continue for 3 months. The conference affirmed the need to support the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people and stressed their confidence in a unified Lebanon. The conference also stressed that peace and security in the region will not be established unless the rights of the Palestinian people to return and establish their own independent state are recognized.

KUWAIT

CUBAN COMMANDER REPORTEDLY IN AN ARAB CAPITAL

NC180930Y Doha QNA in Arabic 0914 GMT 18 Mar 78 NC

[Text] Kuwait, 18 March--Citing reliable sources, the Kuwaiti newspaper AR-RA'Y AL-'AMM says that the commander of the Cuban forces which took part in the Ogaden war--forces which are still there and are estimated at 11,000 strong--has arrived with five of his officers in an Arab capital on a secret visit which will last several days. The paper does not give the name of the Arab capital or the day the visit began.

OMAN

RULER RETURNS HOME FROM EUROPEAN TOUR

JN180947Y Manama GULF NEWS AGENCY in Arabic 0834 GMT 18 Mar 78 JN

[Text] Muscat, 18 March--Sultan Qabus ibn Sa'id of Oman returned here early this morning from a private visit to several West European states lasting several weeks. This was announced by Muscat radio this morning.

QATAR

DELEGATION NAMED TO ARAB LEAGUE MEETINGS IN CAIRO

JN231501Y Manama GULF NEWS AGENCY in Arabic 1415 GMT 23 Mar 78 JN

[Text] Doha, 23 March--It was announced here today that the Qatari delegation to the meetings of the regular session of the Arab League will leave Doha for Cairo tomorrow in order to participate in the meetings which will begin there next Monday.

The Qatari delegation is headed by Sharidah Jubran al-Ka'bi, Qatari ambassador in Cairo and permanent representative of Qatar at the Arab League. It also comprises Fahd Sultan al-Kuwwari, director of administration of the organizations, conferences and international agreements at the Foreign Ministry, and two Foreign Ministry officials.

Fahd Sultan al-Kuwwari has stated that the Arab League meetings acquire a special importance in view of the current Arab situation. Therefore, the question of Arab solidarity and unity of ranks will be at the top of the issues to be discussed so as to face the Zionist danger. The topic of security in the Red Sea will also be discussed.

SAUDI ARABIA

U.S. ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE MOOSE ARRIVES

LD232130Y Riyadh Domestic Service in Arabic 2000 GMT 23 Mar 78 LD

[Text] Mr Richard Moose, the U.S. assistant secretary of state for African affairs, arrived in Jidda this evening. He was received at the airport by Under Secretary of the Foreign Ministry ash-Shaykh 'abd ar-Rahman Masnuri and a number of officials.

OIL MINISTER COMMENTS ON OPEC MEETING ON 3 APRIL

NC231910Y Riyadh SNA in Arabic 1825 GMT 23 Mar 78 NC

[Excerpt] Jidda, 23 March--A plant for mixing oil lubricants will be established in Riyadh soon. The plant will meet the needs of the central and eastern regions, while the needs of the western, northern and southern regions will be met by the Jidda plant, which was opened by Crown Prince and Deputy Prime Minister His Highness Prince Fahd ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz today.

This was stated by Minister of Petroleum and Mineral Affairs Dr Ahmad Zaki Yamani. In an exclusive statement to SNA, Dr Yamani said that the kingdom has a trump card, namely oil, which it can use to put pressure on the industrial states to establish advanced industries in the kingdom based on science and modern technology. He said that so far it has been possible to secure several contracts to build various industries of this type.

Concerning oil prices and the kingdom's attitude, Dr Yamani said the OPEC meeting in Geneva on 3 April is not a conference and has no specific agenda. It is an unofficial meeting and it is not expected to discuss the question of prices.

On the question of ARAMCO, Dr Yamani said that the kingdom took ownership of ARAMCO in January 1976. It is dealing with its former owners on this basis. The financial and administrative rules of the company run on the basis of this ownership, which only needs to be signed to be finalized. It is a routine matter which will be carried out after completing some internal measures, which are being taken now.

KING KHALID WELCOMES VISITING UAE PRESIDENT

LD231212Y Riyadh Domestic Service in Arabic 1130 GMT 23 Mar 78 LD

[Summary] King Khalid ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz received at noon today at his majesty's residence outside Riyadh His Highness Shaykh Zayid ibn Sultan Al Nuhayyan, president of the UAE.

In his visit to the kingdom, which will last 2 days, Shaykh Zayid is accompanied by Shaykh Ahmad ibn Muhammad al-Sharqi, member of the Supreme Council of the Federation and ruler of Fujairah and by the ministers of the interior, foreign affairs and oil and mineral wealth and other senior officials in the state of the emirates. Shaykh Zayid arrived at Dhahran airport before noon today. At noon today his majesty the king gave a luncheon in honor of Shaykh Zayid and his accompanying delegation.

UAE President Comments

LD240838Y Riyadh Domestic Service in Arabic 0600 GMT 24 Mar 78 LD

[Text] Official talks between King Khalid ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz and Shaykh Zayid ibn Sultan Al Nuhayyan, president of the UAE, will begin today. The talks will deal with the latest developments in the situation in the Arab region and bilateral relations. Shaykh Zayid began his 2-day official visit to the kingdom yesterday.

Shaykh Zyid has emphasized that the Arab nation is facing one enemy and that it is now in need of greater unification of its rank in facing the present dangers.

In an exclusive statement to the SAUDI NEWS AGENCY, his highness said that his current visit to the kingdom is considered a good opportunity to meet his brother His Majesty King Khalid ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz and His Royal Highness Prince Fahd ibn 'Abd al-Aziz, crown prince and deputy prime minister, to discuss Arab and international issues in general and gulf issues in particular.

Shaykh Zayid expressed great pleasure with this cordial visit to His Majesty King Khalid and said that he considers himself to be in his second homeland among his kin and people in the kingdom with which the UAE has the strongest fraternal ties. His highness pointed to the importance of such meetings, which bring brothers together so that they can exchange views on matters that are of interest to them and service their homelands and compatriots. He stressed that the importance of such meetings has increased under the circumstances through which the Arab nation is passing.

UAE

TALKS HELD WITH FRG ECONOMIC DELEGATION

JN181542Y Manama GULF NEWS AGENCY in Arabic 1445 GMT 18 Mar 78 JN

[Text] Abu Dhabi, 18 March--Sa'id al-Ghabbash, UAE planning minister, today met here with an FRG economic delegation led by (Hans Guenther Zoll), deputy chairman of the German Industries Union. After the meeting al-Ghabbash stated that he had held talks with the German economic delegation on consolidating economic ties between the two countries, especially those related to the projects currently being implemented in the United Arab Emirates and the fraternal Arab countries.

PRESIDENT OF DJIBOUTI ARRIVES IN ABU DHABI

NC141557Y Riyadh SNA in Arabic 1500 GMT 14 Mar 78 NC

[Text] Abu Dhabi, 14 March--The president of Djibouti, Hassan Gouled, arrived at noon today in Abu Dhabi from Doha on a 3-day visit to the UAE within the framework of his current visit to the region. Radio Abu Dhabi said that UAE President Shaykh Zayid ibn Sultan Al Nuhayyan led those who welcomed President Gouled at the airport.

Leaves Abu Dhabi

JN180953Y Manama GULF NEWS AGENCY in Arabic 0836 GMT 18 Mar 78 JN

[Text] Abu Dhabi, 18 March--President Hassan Gouled of Djibouti left Abu Dhabi this morning for home following a 5-day visit to the UAE. He was seen off at the airport by President Shaykh Zayid ibn Sultan Al Nuhayyan. During this visit President Gouled held talks with His Highness Shaykh Zayid ibn Sultan on the relations between the two countries and the means of strengthening them in all fields.

UAE DELEGATION LEAVES FOR VISIT TO PAKISTAN

JN230834Y Doha QNA in Arabic 0756 GMT 23 Mar 78 JN

[Text] Abu Dhabi, 23 March--UAE Deputy Prime Minister Shaykh Hamdan ibn Muhammad this morning left Abu Dhabi for Pakistan at the head of a delegation for a 1-day visit to Pakistan. The delegation includes Speaker of the Federal National Assembly Turaym 'Imran Turaym and Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Rashid 'Abdallah.

U.A.E. Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Rashid 'Abdallah said prior to the delegation's departure that Shaykh Hamdan is carrying a letter from UAE President His Highness Shaykh Zayid ibn Sultan Al Nuhayyan to Pakistani Martial Law Administrator General Ziaul Haq congratulating him on the Pakistani national day.

The QNA correspondent in Abu Dhabi has learned that the talks which the UAE delegation will have in Pakistan will include impressing the UAE desire that the death sentence passed against former Pakistani Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto be reduced, in accord with the cable of appeal which His Highness Shaykh Zayid sent to General Ziaul Haq on 19 March.

Al Nuhayyan Returns

JN231843Y Manama GULF NEWS AGENCY in Arabic 1824 GMT 23 Mar 78 JN

[Text] Abu Dhabi, 23 March--UAE Deputy Prime Minister Shaykh Hamdan ibn Muhammad Al Nuhayyan returned here from Islamabad this evening at the end of a short visit of a few hours to Pakistan. During his visit Shaykh Hamdan met with the Martial Law Administrator of Pakistan Gen Mohammad Ziaul Haq and conveyed to him a special message from UAE President Shaykh Zayid ibn Sultan Al Nuhayyan on bilateral relations.

DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS ESTABLISHED WITH MALDIVES

NC150852Y Doha QNA in Arabic 0825 GMT 15 Mar 78 NC

[Text] Abu Dhabi, 15 March--The UAE and the Republic of Maldives have decided to establish diplomatic relations at the ambassadorial level to strengthen the friendly relations between them. This was included in a statement which the UAE Foreign Ministry issued today.

YEMEN--PDRY

CPSU DELEGATION ENDS VISIT; STATEMENT MADE

LD171550Y Aden Domestic Service in Arabic 1230 GMT 17 Mar 78 LD/EA

[Excerpts] A delegation from the CPSU, led by Comrade (Yaslenkov), member of the Central Committee and secretary of propaganda affairs of the CPSU [post as heard], left Aden this morning at the end of a visit to the PDRY that lasted several days.

In a statement to an ADEN NEWS AGENCY reporter, Comrade (Yaslenkov) expressed his satisfaction at the results of his visit, which he said had enabled him and his party delegation to acquaint themselves with the activities of the United Political Organization-the National Front [UPONF] and the revolutionary changes effected in Democratic Yemen. He referred to the party agreement signed by UPONF and the CPSU recently and said: We are confident that this agreement will make a major contribution to developing, reinforcing and deepening the relations between the two countries, peoples and parties. He said: We are looking forward to the future of our relations with great optimism.

SUDANESE ENVOY DELIVERS LETTER FROM NUMAYRI

LD161600Y Aden Domestic Service in Arabic 1230 GMT 16 Mar 78 LD/EA

[Summary] Presidential Council Chairman Salim Rubayyi' 'Ali today received the Sudanese nonresident ambassador to the PDRY, 'Abd al-Majid Bashir al-Ahmad, who handed him a letter from President Numayri in reply to an earlier letter. The occasion also coincided with the end of the ambassador's tour of duty as ambassador to the PDRY.

MINISTERS RETURN HOME FROM SYRIA VISIT

LD222109Y Aden Domestic Service in Arabic 1230 GMT 22 Mar 78 LD/EA

[Summary] Foreign Minister Muhammad Salih Muti' and Defense Minister Ali Ahmad Nasir' Antar returned to Aden this morning from Damascus, where they took part in the meeting of foreign and defense ministers of the states of steadfastness and confrontation.

YEMEN--YAR

AL-GHASHMI RECEIVES CABLE FROM AL-QADHDHAFI

JN231938Y San'a' Domestic Service in Arabic 1700 GMT 23 Mar 78 JN

[Text] Brother leader Col Ahmad Husayn al-Ghashmi, chairman of the Command Council and commander in chief of the armed forces, received this evening His Excellency the ambassador of the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriyah in San'a'. The meeting was attended by brother 'Abdallah al-Asnaj, minister of foreign affairs.

The Libyan ambassador handed a reply cable to the brother leader from his brother Col Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi, secretary general of the Libyan General People's Congress. The cable supports the YAR position and blesses the initiative of the brother president and leader Col Ahmad Husayn al-Ghashmi. The following is the text of the cable:

Brother Col Ahmad Husayn al-Ghashmi, chairman of the Command Council and commander in chief of the armed forces, San'a': Greetings. I have received your cable calling for the convening of an urgent Arab summit meeting. We hail the position of the fraternal YAR and bless this initiative. We agree with you on the importance and danger of the decisive events through which the Arab nation is passing, and since it was previously agreed at the latest foreign ministers conference in Tunis to hold an Arab summit in Tripoli, we confirm our readiness to host an Arab summit in Tripoli, we confirm our readiness to host an Arab summit conference. We hope that you will contact the interested Arab parties. Please accept my deep brotherly appreciation.

Signed: Your brother Col Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi

BRIEFS

NEWS AGENCY LINK--Today the direct line between the SAUDI NEWS AGENCY and the GULF NEWS AGENCY began operating. This step is taken to consolidate the communications network between the GULF NEWS AGENCY and other gulf agencies. [Manama GULF NEWS AGENCY in Arabic 1505 GMT 20 Mar 78 JN]

BAHRAINI ENGLISH DAILY--His Highness Shaykh Khalifah ibn Salman AL Kalifah, prime minister of Bahrain, this morning opened work on the first daily English language newspaper to be published in Bahrain, under the name of GULF DAILY NEWS, as of tomorrow, Tuesday. [Manama GULF NEWS AGENCY in Arabic 1425 GMT 20 Mar 78 JN]

KAMIL URGES EEC TO EXERT EFFORTS FOR ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL

NC2316377Y Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic 1500 GMT 23 Mar 78 NC

[Text] Foreign Minister Muhammad Ibrahim Kamil has summoned the Danish ambassador in Cairo in his capacity as the representative of the EEC states. The foreign minister explained to him the seriousness of the situation in the Middle East as a result of the Israeli aggression against southern Lebanon. He said that Israel must withdraw immediately from southern Lebanon and that the EEC states should exert efforts toward this end.

Meanwhile, the foreign minister has sent instructions to the Egyptian ambassadors in the nine EEC states asking them to contact the officials in these states and to urge them to support the international efforts to make Israel withdraw from Lebanon.

The foreign minister also met with the Swiss ambassador in Cairo. They discussed developments in the Middle East. The foreign minister discussed with the Ambassador of Central Africa in Cairo the developments in Africa and bilateral relations between the two countries.

AL-AHRAM CRITICIZES BEHAVIOR IN PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY

LD232205Y Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic 22 Mar 78 pp 1, 5 LD

[Chief editor 'Ali Hamdi al-Jammal article: "The Difference Between Democracy and Anarchy"]

[Text] What happened at the People's Assembly yesterday confirms that some of us do not differentiate between democracy and freedom and confuse expression of freedom and nonsense.

Despite the vigor that characterizes the debates of the People's Assembly most of the time, there are certain people who imagine that freedom of opinion means insults, rowdiness and violating all etiquette. Unfortunately, this phenomenon is not confined to People's Assembly debates but has also spread to all fields of freedom of expression.

At the beginning we used to regard this phenomenon as being due to the long period of deprivation from which the masses suffered--deprivation from the freedom to express opposing views. But with the passage of time it has become obvious that this is not a transient phenomenon that will come to an end. Rather, it is a kind of insistence on resorting to insults as a means of criticism and opposition with total disregard to objectivity or logic.

We all agree that democracy believes in the diversity of views and is keen on giving the minority before the majority the opportunity to express its views but at the same time, without the need for laws and regulations, makes such expression conditional on nonviolation of the etiquette of debate and on mutual respect between those of opposing views.

This is how democracy must be understood by those who express an opinion on any subject, whether in the People's Assembly, or in the information media or at any public forum.

Nevertheless, as in all democratic countries violating decorum does not fighten us because the masses in our country differentiate between the enlightened, objective and wise opinion which is in the public interest and between insults and effrontery to which only the ignorant and those who shout the loudest resort.

AL-JUMHURIYAH COMMENTS ON REJECTIONIST, SOVIET STAND

NC240935Y Cairo MENA in Arabic 0621 GMT 24 Mar 78 NC

[Press review]

[Excerpts] Cairo, 24 March--Today's Cairo newspapers deal with the rejectionist front's stand on the Israeli aggression against southern Lebanon and with how the states of this front have confined themselves to issuing statements without taking any practical stands.

Writing on this subject, the newspaper AL-JUMHURIYAH says: After the fire was raging in Lebanon, after Israel had acted in its usual way and committed the most atrocious crimes and after the Palestinians had called on the rejectionist states and the Soviet Union to fulfill their promises, the states of the communist world did nothing but issue statements of support or denunciation according to the situation. How easy it is to issue statements. The paper points out that after the Security Council had issued its resolution on the cease-fire and the dispatch of UN emergency forces--the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia abstained from voting on the resolution--the rejectionist states moved to rekindle the fire in southern Lebanon.

AL-JUMHURIYAH says: The Libyan radio has reported that the first group of volunteers has been prepared for dispatch to southern Lebanon to participate in the fighting. The paper emphasizes that Al-Qadhdhafi, in doing this, wanted to give Israel the chance to kill more Arabs. The paper adds: In Moscow they are saying that thousands of Iraqi citizens have expressed readiness to fight alongside the Palestinian forces. These thousands will probably not arrive in Lebanon until after the problem has ended. This has been Iraq's custom in every battle against Israel. The paper points out that Moscow, in the meantime, has contacted President al-Asad and has ordered him not to interfere. Al-Asad was persuaded and sent a letter to Moscow declaring that he would remain idle but not silent. Talk is easy as long as the victims are Palestinians.

AL-JUMHURIYAH concludes its commentary by emphasizing that Moscow's objective is to have the area continue in a state of instability. Certain Arabs are helping Moscow with its plan. Israel's aim is a perpetual state of war because it will halt Arab development. Arabs with petty minds are helping it in this. However, the victim is the Palestinian people first and the Arab world second.

AS-SADAT RECEIVES MESSAGE FROM SENEGALESE PRESIDENT

NC201637Y Cairo MENA in Arabic 1612 GMT 20 Mar 78 NC

[Text] Cairo, 20 March--Vice President Husni Mubarak today received Senegalese Ambassador Moustapha Cisse, who handed him a message for President Anwar as-Sadat from Senegalese President Leopold Senghor.

Sends Reply

NC231525Y Cairo MENA in Arabic 1512 GMT 23 Mar 78 NC

[Text] Cairo, 23 March--President Anwar as-Sadat has sent a message to Senegalese President Leopold Senghor in reply to a message President Senghor had sent to President as-Sadat recently. It has been learned that the message deals with current African issues of interest to both countries and recent developments in the Middle East. Foreign Minister Muhammad Ibrahim Kamil handed the message to Senegalese Ambassador in Cairo Ibra Mamadou N'gom during a meeting between them today.

[illegible]AR ON EFFORT TO ACQUIRE NUCLEAR ARMS

LD 3221GY Kuwait AS-SIYASAH in Arabic 21 Mar 78 p 19 LD

[Special political report by ORIENT PRESS: "Those Rejecting a Settlement With Israel Prepare for the Alternative: Will the Arabs Too Acquire a Nuclear Bomb To Prevent Israeli Blackmail? 32 Square Meters and $1.5 Billion Can Enable the Arabs To Put an End to Israeli Threats; the United States Exercises All Kinds of Pressures and Holds Secret Conferences To Prevent Arabs From Possessing Nuclear Weapons"]

[Text] The question of Israel's possession of an atomic bomb has turned from being a matter of speculation and varying news reports into one of direct political blackmail of the Arabs through which Israel wants to impose its absolute will and the solutions it wishes; that is, until further notice.

This further notice is the Arabs' possession of a similar weapon capable of speaking the same language and of countering the deterrent power with a similar and even more effective power.

It is only then that the road to settlement will be open, exactly as the detente between the major powers has been reached under the balance of terror, of deterrent and counter-deterrent.

Somewhere between the Euphrates and the Tigris, at a distance of several kilometers from Baghdad, the Iraqi capital, a model village has been built consisting of a large number of villas at the center of which there are swimming pools, playgrounds, public gardens and night clubs. The model village is surrounded by a wall of barbed wire and on its main iron gate a large sign says: "Entrance absolutely prohibited." The village is guarded by a select force of Iraqi security men. Some 480 French engineers and technicians live in this village with their families.

As for their task, it is to build a nuclear reactor of the "Oziris" type.

Vice Chairman of Iraqi Revolution Council Command Saddam Husayn had agreed with French President Giscard d'Estaing on building this reactor when he visited France in September 1975. This major project costs $1.45 billion. Construction of the reactor began after the final signing of the agreement in August 1976. The agreement provides that the construction of the reactor should be completed by 1981.

Construction is being carried out by the French "Syriac" consortium in arrangement with the Iraqi and French governments.

The production of the reactor itself was begun in France in 1963 at the (Siaclay) nuclear research center south of Paris. The reactor's output is 70 megawatts and it occupies an area of 32 square meters and is 20 meters high. The reactor operates with 93 percent enriched uranium, which is sufficient to produce an atomic bomb.

It is for this specific reason that the United States opposes the building of this reactor. The United States tried to bring pressure on France to cancel the deal, but Iraq threatened with abrogating all economic, commercial, and oil deals with France. The United States then tried to bring pressure on France so as not to sell enriched uranium to Iraq and to restrict the reactor's operations to tests and scientific research involving the use of only 70 percent enriched uranium. But the Iraqi-French agreement provides for France to supply Iraq with enriched uranium for a period of 2 years. While France canceled a similar agreement with Pakistan, it honored its agreement with Iraq, just as West Germany honored its agreement with Argentina, Canada with India.

However, Iraq's possession of a nuclear reactor capable of producing a nuclear bomb will have far-reaching political and military repercussions. This is because Israel is trying to have the exclusive possession of nuclear weapons so that it can maintain its military supremacy and therefore be able to dictate its political conditions on all the Arab world.

There is no longer any doubt that Israel possesses at least 15 atomic bombs. This has been confirmed by the CIA and the Soviet KGB intelligence reports.

On the third day of the October 1973 war and after the Israeli forces penetrated the Bar-Lev line and repelled the Israeli counteroffensive and after the Syrian forces penetrated the first Israeli defense line on the Golan and occupied Mount Hermon, the commander of the northern Israeli front, Maj Gen Yitzhaq Hoffi, contacted Defense Minister Moshe Dayan. The time was 2200 on 8 October. He told him: "I am no longer sure that we can resist for long."

Shortly after midnight the same night Dayan contacted Prime Minister Golda Meir and told her: "I see the end of Israel." The following morning Golda Meir gave the green light to bring out the atomic bombs from their hideouts and transport them to military airfields.

Here the U.S. and Soviet satellites picked up photographs of the bombs and the United States intervened in order to change the course of war and the Soviet Union turned a blind eye so that Israel would not be forced to use the atomic weapon in the manner of Israel's Samson.

Ever since, there have been information leaks on how uranium was smuggled from the United States to Israel.

Perhaps the biggest theft of this kind was that carried out by Zalman Shapiro who worked in the "Apollo" plant in the United States. Then the story of the ship "Mayday," which carried 200 tons of uranium, sufficient to manufacture 30 atomic bombs of the Hiroshima bomb type, was revealed.

Israel first denied such reports and then remained silent so that its confession of possessing an atomic weapon will not give justification for Arab nuclear armament.

Secret conferences against the Arabs: In order to contain any initiative by the Arab countries to possess an atomic bomb, three secret meetings have been held in London up to this date by countries producing or capable of producing atomic bombs, in order to prevent the export of the atomic bomb or the know-how of its manufacture to the other countries.

Obviously, the other countries meant here were the Arab countries, foremost of which is Iraq, and this for two reasons:

First, because Iraq is building a nuclear reactor with the help of French technology and that the agreement on building the reactor commits France to providing Iraq with its requirements of enriched uranium;

Second, because Iraq pursues a policy extremely hostile to Israel to the point that it is the only country among the 22 Arab states that rejects the principle of Israel's existence and its right to live within secure and recognized borders in accordance with Security Council Resolution No 242.

For this reason Iraq is the target of a hostile campaign, not only against its nuclear plans but also against strengthening its military forces.

U.S. press reports say that the Soviet Union recently agreed to sell Iraq giant military transport planes of the IL-76 type and that France agreed to sell it 36 Mirage F-1 planes as well as tank transport vehicles. As part of stepping up this campaign against Iraq, these press reports deliberately linked Iraq's armament (both conventional and nuclear) to the anxiety felt by its neighbors Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Iran, and Syria, despite the fact that Iraq's primary reason for arming is Israel.

According to the figures of the establishment of military strategies in London, Iraqi armed forces have reached 188,000 men, of which 60,000 are land forces (1,400 tanks and 2,000 armored vehicles), 3,000 in the navy (3 submarines and 10 boats armed with STX missiles), and 25,000 in the air force (429 planes).

The Israelis, according to the HERALD TRIBUNE, are showing great concern over Iraq's building the 12th division of the Iraqi Army.

The Iraqis, who are well aware of the true intentions of the Israelis, are taking precautions and are going ahead in building the nuclear reactor and boosting their military forces on the grounds that a political settlement is bound to fail and that war is inevitable.

RESOLUTION SENDING UN FORCES TO LEBANON DENOUNCED

JN241053Y Baghdad INA in Arabic 1015 GMT 24 Mar 78 JN

[Text] Baghdad, 24 March--The newspaper ATH-THAWRAH published here today denounces the UN Security Council resolution to station UN emergency forces in southern Lebanon. The paper says this is a part of the imperialist-Zionist plot against the Palestinian revolution.

The paper says that implementation of this resolution means placing the barrier of UN forces in the way of the Arab revolutionaries to prevent them from fighting the enemy inside the occupied Arab land. It also exposes the Palestinian resistance to political pressure by the capitulatory prosettlement regimes so as to involve the resistance in the labyrinths of a settlement.

The paper says that the Security Council resolution also discloses the extent of the U.S. commitment to the Zionist entity and the U.S. blessing of all its aggressive and expansionist policies.

In conclusion the paper says that the Palestinian resistance, which confronted the Zionist enemy with the heroism of courageous revolutionaries, is now required to fulfill the sacrifices of the martyrs--to say no to the resolution which will close the doors of Palestine to its revolutionaries. It is required to say no to the resolution which is the beginning of a new bloody liquidation that will be carried out by the allies of the Zionist entity both in Lebanon and in the Arab regimes that pursue a capitulatory and liquidationist course.

KING HUSAYN LEAVES FOR PRIVATE VISIT TO TEHERAN

JN231219Y Amman Domestic Service in Arabic 1200 GMT 23 Mar 78 JN

[Text] His Majesty King Husayn left Amman this morning for Iran on a private visit of several days. During this visit he will meet with His Majesty Shah of Iran Mohammad Reza Pahlavi.

His majesty was seen off by His Highness Crown Prince Hasan, Her Highness Princess 'Alyah, the prime minister, a number of state officials and the Iranian ambassador in Amman. His Highness Prince Hasan was sworn in before the king and cabinet as regent during his majesty's absence from the homeland. His majesty is accompanied on this visit by Her Highness Princess Basmah, His Highness Prince 'Abdallah, His Highness Prince Faysal and his highness the chief chamberlain.

HASAN IBRAHIM RETURNS TO AMMAN, MAKES STATEMENT

JN231459Y Amman JNA in Arabic 1430 GMT 23 Mar 78 JN

[Text] Amman, 23 March--Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Hasan Ibrahim today returned to Amman following a tour during which he visited Egypt, Libya, Algeria and Morocco and conveyed messages from His Majesty King Husayn to the leaders of these states containing his majesty's assessment of the current Arab situation, the Israeli aggression against southern Lebanon and his majesty's view of future Arab possibilities.

Minister Ibrahim said that His Majesty King Husayn emphasized in his messages the necessity for convening an Arab summit as soon as possible to draw up a comprehensive plan based on building the intrinsic Arab power to confront the Israeli aggression and to protect the Arab territory from the dangers it is facing. Minister Ibrahim also said that the leaders of the countries he visited showed appreciation of his majesty's assessment of the Arab situation and welcomed the call for an Arab summit conference. He said that he will convey to his majesty the king the Arab leaders' replies to his call as well as their assessments of the situation.

AD-DUSTUR PRAISES CARTER, URGES NO ARMS FOR ISRAEL

JN240912Y Amman Domestic Service in Arabic 0515 GMT 24 Mar 78 JN

[From the press review]

[Text] Under the headline "What Next, After Failure of Carter-Begin Talks" the newspaper AD-DUSTUR writes: U.S. Secretary of State Cyrus Vance's public announcement at a press conference that the talks between President Carter and Menahem Begin had failed to alter their stands toward interpretation of Security Council Resolution No 242, the settlements and the Palestinian right to self-determination is unprecedented. The custom of former U.S. administrations was to keep differences between Washington and Tel Aviv secret so that enemies would not gloat.

Pro-Israeli senators including Henry Jackson have exerted efforts to keep the differences between Carter and Begin secret. The U.S. administration rejected this pressure and decided to divulge the secret and publicize the differences so that the U.S. citizen, who pays the toll of maintaining Israel's security, will learn that by its intransigence and obduracy Israel is threatening peace and U.S. interests in the Middle East.

Just as we find in the U.S. stand toward Begin that the United States is not ready to be led blindly behind Israeli ambitions, we must also notice that President Carter chose to meet with the members of the congressional foreign relations committees to discuss the issue of the arms deals to three countries in the Middle East while Begin is in Washington. This indicates that Carter is not ready to submit to the pressure exerted by certain Congress members to stop the delivery of arms to Egypt and Saudi Arabia and to sell them to Israel.

AD-DUSTUR continues, saying: Even so, these two positive stands by President Carter remain less than what is required to break down Israeli obduracy, represented in the military havoc Israel has wrought in southern Lebanon and in its blocking the avenues of the peace process. What is required--now that Washington yesterday announced the death of the peace initiative to the world--is that Washington should call on the Security Council to debate what has happened on the Middle East issue as a result of Israel's intransigence. This is because the Security Council adopted Resolution 242 and is thus authorized to interpret it. Also the adoption of another resolution that frankly provides for the Palestinian people's right to self-determination would decisively solve this issue by the highest international forum in a way that would prevent Israel from stalling.

Also U.S. diplomacy is now required to resume dialog with the Soviet Union to reconvene the Geneva conference, with the participation of all parties, because such a step would end the deadlock which Israel wants to maintain now that the Carter-Begin talks have failed. This step will also stop wasting time--the waste Israel has always sought, disregarding its grave repercussions.

In addition to this, Washington is required to stop giving Israel more arms now that it has been proven to the U.S. administration that the arsenal it poured into Israel, making it the strongest power in the area, failed to make it flexible, as U.S. officials used to hope. The contrary has been proven. Power has made Israel arrogant.

Anyway, it is fair to record the courageous stand to which President Carter committed himself in the difficult talks he held with Begin. Perhaps the U.S. President after this experience will be convinced that Israel has chosen the usurpation of land and not peace. Perhaps this conviction will be translated into effective measures to reduce Israel to size and into establishing a just, honorable peace in the area.

SARKIS MAKES STATEMENT AT CABINET MEETING

NC2319Z1Y Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1826 GMT 23 Mar 78 NC

[Text] President Ilyas Sarkis presided over an extraordinary cabinet meeting tonight which was attended by the prime minister and the other ministers. Before the meeting President Sarkis met with Prime Minister al-Huss and Minister of Foreign Affairs Fu'ad Butrus, who were later joined by Minister of Public Works and Transport Engineer Amin al-Bizri.

At the outset of the cabinet meeting, President Sarkis expressed satisfaction at the arrival of vanguards of the UN forces in Lebanon. He expressed the hope that the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 425 will achieve the desired results. The president added: This matter is consolidated by the international community's stand regarding Lebanon--a stand embodied in the UN Security Council resolution by calling for respect of Lebanon's territorial integrity, sovereignty and political independence within its recognized international borders. The importance of the Security Council in this respect is the fact that it excludes Lebanon from any future argument about its border. As we are continuing our efforts to impose our sovereignty over every inch of our territory, it is natural that we seek--in cooperation with the United Nations, other international agencies and fraternal and friendly states--to implement every provision, clause and principle contained in the UN Security Council resolution. We will continue these efforts by using all means at our disposal, within the country and outside it. No difficulties or circumstances will bar our efforts to achieve our complete sovereignty over all our territory.

The president added: We reject the interference by any state or quarter in our affairs or in our territory without our prior approval and without its being compatible with our sovereignty and security, whatever the pretexts and considerations may be. We affirm these principles, which stem from the will of all the Lebanese and from the requisites of our independence, sovereignty and dignity, which we strongly stress and abide by. To those attempting to impose any solution, course or matter due to the recent crisis, while ignoring the will and interests of our people, we say that we know our affairs and the interest of our better and that we will only accept being masters of ourselves and our future.

The president concluded: We will resort to every means to put an end to such interference and practices by deploying Lebanon's resources and friendships or by utilizing the capabilities put at Lebanon's disposal at its request by fraternal states who continue to shoulder a great deal of responsibility toward Lebanon. The safety of the homeland's sovereignty, territorial integrity and unity of its people is a trust which we uphold. We will spare no effort to preserve this trust.

On leaving the presidential palace at 1950, Minister of Foreign Affairs Fu'ad Butrus said that his meeting with U.S. Ambassador Parker was a normal one and he has no comment to make. He said: The ambassador came to the presidential palace because he wanted to meet me. I left the cabinet meeting for about 20 minutes to meet with the ambassador as it will be difficult to meet with him later. Tomorrow, Good Friday, is a public holiday.

AL-HUSS COMMENTS ON IRAQI COMMANDOS IN SOUTH

NC240856Y Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 0800 GMT 24 Mar 78 NC

[Text] Prime Minister Dr Salim al-Huss was asked this morning about a statement which AFP has attributed to Saddam Husayn, deputy chairman of the Iraqi Revolution Command Council. According to AFP, Saddam Husayn said that a unit of Iraqi commandos has arrived in southern Lebanon and he called on the Lebanese and Palestinians to continue the struggle.

Prime Minister al-Huss said: Lebanon has decided to seek to recover its territories, which have been occupied by the Israeli invaders in the south, through implementation of the UN Security Council resolution. He added: This is Lebanon's will. We expect the friendly fraternal states that want to help us end our tribulation to respect this will when adopting any stand connected with our cause. Prime Minister al-Huss said: The Security Council resolution calls for full respect for Lebanese sovereignty. Therefore, our friends are obligated to be the first to respect this sovereignty. Lebanon's deliverance from its present tribulation lies in the total implementation of the Security Council resolution, which stipulates Israeli withdrawal from Lebanese territory and total respect for Lebanese sovereignty. The prime minister added: Any other stand will not be in Lebanon's interest but will be adopted at Lebanon's expense. Our stand stems from our appreciation of our national and pan-Arab responsibilities, from the attention we devote to our national interest, and from our awareness of the requisites of the Arab cause in the present circumstances.

SARKIS RECEIVES MESSAGE FROM FRENCH PRESIDENT

NC231331Y Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1130 GMT 23 Mar 78 NC

[Text] The French ambassador in Lebanon today handed President Ilyas Sarkis the following message from French President Valery Giscard d'Estaing: As the vanguard of the French troops put at the disposal of the United Nations are arriving in Lebanon, I would like to convey to you on behalf of the French people and on my own behalf a message of friendship and affection. Friendship is a traditional aspect of relations between our two countries, but it is affirmed more strongly in time of affliction. This is why France took part in the UN Security Council resolution of 19 March in response to the desire of the Lebanese Government. This is also why France agreed to contribute directly and substantially toward the operation enabling the Lebanese Government to assume its responsibilities in its territory.

The afflicted people must know that they are not alone and that the French people accord them every affection and will not abandon them. I hope that they will find this expressed by the fact that French soldiers are among them.

I also hope that the Lebanese people will find encouragement and hope in the presence of French soldiers--encouragement to proceed with the national detente to which Your Excellency has aspired since assuming office and which is more necessary now than ever before. We hope for a united Lebanon because a united Lebanon is necessary to maintain a balance and peace in this part of the world. Be assured that France, which strongly adheres to its respect for Lebanon's sovereignty and territorial integrity, supports you. This is the significance of France's participation in the peace operation assumed by the United Nations.

Please accept my esteem, feelings and respect.

U.S. AMBASSADOR PARKER MEETS SARKIS, BUTRUS

NC231830Y Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1730 GMT 23 Mar 78 NC

[Text] Following the cabinet meeting today, President Ilyas Sarkis met with U.S. Ambassador in Lebanon Richard Parker in the presence of Minister of Foreign Affairs Fu'ad Butrus. Minister Butrus met earlier with the U.S. ambassador in one of the offices of the presidential palace.

On leaving the presidential palace at 1930, the U.S. ambassador said: I met with President Sarkis and Minister Butrus at my request. Asked if the United States was satisfied with the process of the deployment of the UN forces, Ambassador Parker said: There is a tangible progress and activity toward this goal. Answering a question, the U.S. ambassador denied that he has conveyed a message from President Carter to President Sarkis.

Meets With Al-Huss

NC231306Y Voice of Lebanon [Clandestine] in Arabic to Lebanon 1215 GMT 23 Mar 78 NC

[Excerpt] The U.S. ambassador in Beirut, Mr Richard Parker, said today that Israeli forces will not withdraw from southern Lebanon before all the UN forces arrive there. Mr Parker was speaking following his meeting with Prime Minister Dr Salim al-Huss today during which they discussed the situation in southern Lebanon and the wheat agreement which Lebanon intends to conclude with the United States.

Meets With Saudi Ambassador

NC241048Y Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1000 GMT 24 Mar 78 NC

[Text] The Saudi ambassador to Lebanon, Gen 'Ali ash-Sha'ir, received U.S. Ambassador to Lebanon Richard Parker at 1000 today. The meeting went on until 1100. After the meeting the Saudi ambassador said: My discussions with the U.S. ambassadors dealt with current developments in the situation in the south and the Israeli forces' withdrawal from Lebanese territory. He added: I have learned that Ambassador Parker is exerting continuous, intensive efforts toward this end.

KUWAITI AMBASSADOR MEETS BUTRUS, MAKES STATEMENT

NC231249Y Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1130 GMT 23 Mar 78 NC

[Text] Minister of Foreign Affairs Fu'ad Butrus today met with Kuwaiti Ambassador to Lebanon 'Abd al-Hamid al-Bu'ayjan for 30 minutes.

The Kuwaiti ambassador said later: Minister Butrus and I discussed the current situation and developments and the hopes in the next phase following the arrival of the UN forces. We hope there will be an improvement in the situation and the evacuees will return to their land and homes.

Asked whether Kuwait will attend the forthcoming Arab League council meeting, he said: I have not been notified as yet. However, Kuwait has never failed to attend such meetings. Asked whether Kuwait will extend aid to Lebanon, he said: It has been decided to extend material and humanitarian assistance to Lebanon. The Kuwaiti Government is currently arranging to dispatch its aid to Lebanon by air. He affirmed that Kuwait supports all efforts leading to consolidating stability and peace in Lebanon.

JOINT FORCES OPPOSED TO UN FORCES IN SOUTH

JN231330Y Baghdad INA in Arabic 1312 GMT 23 Mar 78 JN

[Text] Beirut, 23 March--The central command of the joint Lebanese-Palestinian forces held a lengthy meeting last night and studied the military situation in southern Lebanon in light of the continued Zionist aggression and the arrival of the UN forces in southern Lebanon.

The command adopted a number of decisions, the most important of which is rejection of the entry of UN forces in the areas where the joint forces are in southern Lebanon, so that the Security Council resolution will not be an umbrella to protect the Zionist occupation. The command stressed the need for the withdrawal of the occupier forces as a condition for any later steps for cooperation with the UN emergency forces and Lebanon's restoration of authority in southern Lebanon.

MORE IRANIAN UN FORCES ARRIVE IN SOUTH LEBANON

NC231100Y Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1000 GMT 23 Mar 78 NC

[Text] Vanguards of the Iranian Army have begun to arrive in Lebanon. Twenty-three Iranian soldiers arrived in the Marj 'Uyun area of southern Lebanon this morning. These soldiers belong to the Iranian UN force in the Golan Heights. About 150 Iranian troops entered southern Lebanon this morning from the Israeli sector of Metulla, which is near Marj 'Uyun. They were received by Irish and British officers who were among the vanguards of the UN emergency force that entered south Lebanon yesterday.

Other Forces Enter South

NC231304Y Voice of Lebanon [Clandestine] in Arabic to Lebanon 1215 GMT 23 Mar 78 NC

[Text] Iraqi and other forces are pouring into some areas of southern Lebanon and the refugee camps. This morning they took up positions in (Al-Ma'maliyah) village, north of Sidon.

PALESTINIAN GUNMEN REPORTEDLY SEIZE RED CROSS AID

NC231938Y Voice of Lebanon [Clandestine] in Arabic to Lebanon 1915 GMT 23 Mar 78 NC

[Text] It was reported tonight that Palestinian gunmen have this afternoon forcibly seized aid and medicines sent to the Lebanese Red Cross. The gunmen gave the aid to the Palestinian Red Crescent. This incident took place within the sight of the security forces assigned to guard the area surrounding Beirut airport.

INA: ISRAELIS SHELL VILLAGES IN EASTERN SECTOR

JN231333Y Baghdad INA in Arabic 1315 GMT 23 Mar 78 JN

[Text] Beirut, 23 March--The central command has stated that Zionist forces this morning shelled the heights of the Kawkaba and Qilya villages in the eastern sector with artillery and tanks. The central command further stated that the joint forces responded by shelling the Metulla settlement and Zionist positions in Marj 'Uyun and Suq al-Khan. The shelling lasted approximately 1 hour.

The central command stated that one enemy tank was destroyed at the Suq al-Khan cross-road and was seen in flames, while the enemy was seen evacuating those injured from this enemy position.

HUNGARIAN DELEGATION CONCLUDES TALKS IN DAMASCUS

JN240635Y Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 0415 GMT 24 Mar 78 JN

[Text] Party talks between the Ba'th Party delegation headed by Dr Fawwaz Sayyagh, member of the Ba'th Party National Command and chief of the Office of Foreign Relations, and the delegation of the Hungarian Socialist Workers Party headed by Jeno Fock, member of the Politburo, ended last night. During the talks subjects of joint interest were discussed. An agreement for party cooperation for the years 1978 and 1979 was signed too.

Dr Sayyagh has affirmed that this agreement will be effective in improving relations in the service of the interests of the two countries. The Hungarian official and the members of the delegation expressed satisfaction with the talks held during their stay in Syria. A joint statement will be issued on this visit.

KHADDAM RECEIVES CABLE FROM BOUTEFLIKA

JN232145Y Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 2115 GMT 23 Mar 78 JN

[Text] Algiers--Algerian Foreign Minister Abde laziz Bouteflika has affirmed that the Damascus meeting and the work accomplished during the meeting of the national front of steadfastness and confrontation will further entrench the foundations of the front and strengthen the solidarity to continue the march to achieve the objectives of the Arab nation. Bouteflika said this in a cable to Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister 'Abd al-Halim Khaddam.

The Algerian foreign minister said in his cable: Our meeting was a precious occasion to hold talks and consultations on strengthening the existing historic ties between our two fraternal countries and to bolster the joint struggle against Zionism and imperialism.

Referring to the warm brotherly reception accorded him during the meeting of the foreign and defense ministers of the front of steadfastness and confrontation, Bouteflika said: This reflects the true Arab traditions of the Syrian Arab people.

Al-BA'TH SAYS U.S. INVOLVED IN ISRAELI AGGRESSION

LD232212Y Damascus AL-BA'TH in Arabic 17 Mar 78 p 3 LD

[Muhammad Mansur article: "Syria Shall Remain Loyal to Its Principles"]

[Text] All the peoples and countries of the world have condemned the Zionist attack on Lebanon, with the exception of some countries whose attitude toward the Arab-Israeli conflict is well known. But the attitude of the United States calls for pause, because for some time the U.S. administration has been claiming that its attitude toward the conflict is that of a "mediator" whereas all its previous and subsequent stances have proved that it is not so, but rather the opposite. The U.S. administration is not only biased in favor of Israel, but also participates in its planning as has been evident so far and has been confirmed and continues to be confirmed by daily events.

Although the U.S. administration has denied having any previous knowledge of the barbaric Zionist aggression against Lebanon, all reports confirm, and Begin himself has confirmed, that President Carter was informed of the details of the operations hours before it took place. This means that the United States approved the operation. Otherwise, why did it not take action if it cared for peace in the area as it claims, and, consequently, why did it not condemn the aggression?

There is no doubt that Israel is the aggressor, but this does not negate the fact that the United States is directly involved. This new stand by the U.S. administration makes it incumbent upon us Arabs, who refuse all the capitulatory steps, to reconsider our position as well as all the formulas that have been valid so far, because the general Arab situation does not tolerate any new mistakes. The Arabs have always been for peace, but for a just peace that gives back the land to its rightful owners unconditionally and without humiliating concessions.

Syria, which stands on the first confrontation line, yesterday affirmed that it will remain on the side of the Palestinian revolution and will not spare any help for it to face all eventualities. This also applies to sisterly Lebanon, for whose safety Syria has endured a great deal on the Arab and international levels, because Syria's security is linked to that of Lebanon and vice versa. Therefore, Arab Syria, under President Hafiz al-Asad's leadership, will always remain, as it has always been, true to its national principles and will not allow any power to harm the dignity of the Arab nation regardless of circumstances.

DEFENSE MINISTER INAUGURATES MILITARY ACADEMY

JN232031Y Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1915 GMT 23 Mar 78 JN

[Excerpts] Aleppo--The cornerstone of the Al-Asad Military Engineering Academy was laid at a ceremony today in Aleppo under the patronage of President Hafiz al-Asad, the commander in chief of the army and armed forces, as part of the country's celebrations of the 15th anniversary of the glorious 8 March Revolution. The president was represented at the ceremony and the laying of the cornerstone by Gen Mustafa Talas, the deputy commander in chief of the army and armed forces and defense minister.

After laying the cornerstone of the academy and unveiling the memorial slate, the defense minister met with the students of the academy and delivered a speech on this occasion. General Talas began his speech by conveying the greetings of President Hafiz al-Asad, the commander in chief of the army and armed forces, to those participating in this great project and to the students. He affirmed that Syria will remain the vanguard of steadfastness and confrontation against all imperialist and Zionist attempts to undermine the dignity and struggle of our nation. Our Syrian Arab Army, the army of Arab nationalism, will continue to defend our Arab people in all Arab countries.

General Talas dealt with the Zionist occupation of southern Lebanon, explaining the reasons behind the Zionist enemy's occupation of that area. He affirmed that the enemy has always had hostile expansionist designs on southern Lebanon and hoped to crush the Palestinian resistance.

General Talas announced that Syria--leader, army and people--will remain the power protecting and backing the Palestinian resistance and defending the issues of the Arab nation until all the national objectives of liberating the occupied Arab territories and restoring the legitimate rights of our Palestinian Arab people are achieved.

Referring to the academy, General Talas pointed out that this project is part of the efforts by the revolution, the party and leadership to strengthen and develop the fighting capability of our Syrian Arab Army so it can fulfill its national tasks in the best manner possible and in all fields.

BRIEFS

AMBASSADORS' CREDENTIALS--President Hafiz al-Asad today received individually the credentials of Dr Franz Parak, Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Austria; Kim Yong-ha, Ambassador of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea; and Joachim Bekert, Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany in Damascus. [Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1215 GMT 23 Mar 78 JN]

LIBYA

CHAD FOREIGN MINISTER CONCLUDES TRIPOLI VISIT

LD2214444Y Tripoli Domestic Service in Arabic 1230 GMT 22 Mar 78 LD

[Excerpt] Chad Foreign Minister Kamougue left Tripoli this morning at the end of his 3-day visit to the Jamahiriyah.

MOROCCO

OSMAN COMMENTS ON SIGNIFICANCE OF PACTS WITH USSR

LD2315085Y Rabat Domestic Service in Arabic 1300 GMT 23 Mar 78 LD

[Excerpts] Prime Minister Ahmed Osman has given an important interview to AL-MAGHRIB on the results of his visit to the Soviet Union and the importance of the agreements signed between the two countries on 10 March in Moscow.

Mr Ahmed Osman said that the agreements on phosphates are of great importance; they crowned the negotiations which began in February 1974. Agreement was reached on mutual cooperation in exploiting the Miskala phosphate mines in three stages. Regarding interests and profits which Morocco and the USSR would be reaping, the prime minister said that our country has 75 percent of the world's phosphate reserves; the USSR has only 7 percent.

Regarding the political significance of the agreements, Mr Ahmed Osman declared that this significance is clear and was asserted in the joint communique when it pointed out that both sides observed that the past 20 years since the establishment of diplomatic relations had witnessed a continued development of these relations based on the principles of peaceful coexistence, respect for national sovereignty and territorial integrity, noninterference in internal affairs, and equality and common interest.

Regarding Morocco's openness and its pursuance of a new policy toward the socialist countries, the prime minister said that this policy was not conceived on the spur of the moment; Morocco has good relations with socialist Europe, as it does with the Western world.

Concluding, the prime minister said: Morocco is the country of forbearance and the middle of the road. The economic factor can surpass the political one in the interest of peace and understanding among the peoples and the prosperity of mankind.

KING HASSAN RECEIVES JORDANIAN KING'S ENVOY

LD2214104Y Rabat Domestic Service in Arabic 1300 GMT 22 Mar 78 LD

[Text] This morning His Majesty King Hassan II received at the royal palace Mr Hasan Ibrahim, Jordanian minister of state for foreign affairs, who handed his majesty a personal letter from His Majesty King Husayn. Present were M'hamed Boucetta, minister of state for foreign affairs and cooperation, and Mr Hani Tabbarah, Jordanian ambassador to Morocco.

After the meeting the Jordanian minister told our correspondent: [Hassan Ibrahim--begin recording] I have had the honor of an audience with his majesty.

The aim of the visit was to deliver a letter from His Majesty King Husayn to his majesty on current Arab events and the bloody events in southern Lebanon and also to study the probabilities of holding an Arab meeting to formulate a comprehensive plan based on Arab solidarity to confront future probabilities.

His majesty made me very happy because of the explanation of how he views the current Arab stage and the future probabilities. I will convey these valuable viewpoints and guidance from his majesty to his brother King Husayn. Thank you. [end recording]

Mr Hasan Ibrahim left Sale airport a short while ago. He was seen off by M'hamed Boucetta, minister of state for foreign affairs and cooperation; Mr Hani Tabbarah, Jordanian ambassador; and (Umar Bun Shatrun), head of protocol at the Foreign Ministry.

FORMER POLISARIO OFFICIAL ARRIVES, SEES OFFICIALS

LD211032Y Rabat MAP in Arabic 0800 GMT 21 Mar 78 LD

[Text] Rabat--A former official of the so-called POLISARIO has arrived in the homeland. He is Mukhtar Mohamed Salim Ould Habib, born in El Aaiun in 1932. Mukhtar Ould Habib, who was a businessman in Las Palmas, at the same time controlled an important network of support and information run by the so-called POLISARIO and Algeri . Mukhtar Ould Habib disclosed important information connected with the secret organs of the POLISARIO and the Cubillo terrorist movement in the Canary Islands. He also explained the role of Algerian intelligence in that region.

LE MATIN CRITICIZES FRONT'S IGNORING PALESTINIANS

LD240937Y Casablanca LE MATIN in French 18 Mar 78 pp 1, 3 LD

[Ahmed Alaoui editorial: "Israel's Aggression"]

[Excerpt] Using the commando operation carried out last week by the Palestinian resistance as a pretext, Israel launched a major offensive against southern Lebanon and is now occupying 10 percent of Lebanese territory, an area comparable in size to Morocco's Rif region. There is every reason to believe that this occupation will continue as it does in the other occupied territories as long as the present situation remains unchanged. But what is most serious is that the Zionist forces have engaged in a real massacre of the Palestinian resistance and even the civilian population by bombing camps around Beirut and various regions of Lebanon.

And all this comes without the rejection front's diehards making the smallest gesture to defend these unfortunates. The Israeli forces have been able to launch an operation to liquidate the fedayeen without eliciting any reaction on the part of these warmongers other than empty words and new assurances whose futility the Palestinians can now realize. Algiers in particular merely expressed its "grave concern."

Once more the Palestinian people and an Arab country--Lebanon--have fallen victim to this behavior. It should be restated that Israel seizes every opportunity to implement its dream of a greater Israel and that the best way to stop it and even force it to retreat is to impose peace on it. The members of the rejection front and its supporters have gone so far as to condemn President as-Sadat and accuse him of treason and capitulation. But yesterday they passively watched the liquidation of Palestinian resistance in southern Lebanon.

This new drama, this tragedy, has made it clear that the people responsible for all this are those who are incapable either of waging war or making peace. By their attitude, they play into Israel's hands. In short, they behave like the Zionist state's objective allies.

TUNISIA

L'ACTION: ISRAELI ATTACK SHOWS NEED FOR UNITY

LD221111Y Tunis L'ACTION in French 17 Mar 78 p 1 LD

[Moncef Chihi article: "Another Way..."]

[Text] Israel has been able to give expression to its revanchist policy in the most barbaric and blindest manner. The Israeli army's attack against Palestinian camps, which has been out of all proportion to the reasons for it, has on the whole aroused only moderate reactions expressed in measured or even embarrassed terms. All this has naturally given rise to queries on the subject of the violent condemnations of the fedayeen's recent operation in Tel Aviv, from which it would appear that all casualties are always "innocent" when they are Israelis and "terrorists" whenever they are Palestinians.

The point is that Mr Begin knows all about terrorism. Following a reflex inherited from his past in Irgun, he has entrusted his army with a task which neither he 30 years ago nor any other Israeli prime minister has ever been able to bring to a successful conclusion--the task of liquidating the Palestinian people, thus "resolving" the difficult problem of a necessary Palestinian representation in any peace initiative. He hopes to be able at last to make his old dream come true by occupying southern Lebanon. However, neither the Palestinian entity nor the Palestinian people's existence can be seen in terms of a "4-6 km" zone in southern Lebanon. All that he has achieved is to exacerbate sentiments among the victims of this tragedy and to shed more blood.

The Arabs, who have hitherto been paralyzed as a result of internal conflicts, must now suppress their emotions and keep certain inordinate ambitions under control in order to embark on the path of firm and concrete support for the Palestinian resistance. It is time to cease blaming one another for all the misfortunes suffered by the Palestinian people, since this is only prolonging their suffering.

It has been realized that no problem is likely to be resolved through war. The Israelis know this, and their political and diplomatic maneuvers and also their bloody though restricted terrorist acts have proved this point even further. The Arabs must embark on a different path--the path of realism and effectiveness. Their support for the Palestinian resistance will be more effective if it is a result of a common political will free from any desire to dominate others and any reservations. Such a will implies active solidarity, which is slow in taking shape.

WESTERN SAHARA

SAHARAN VICTORIES AGAINST MOROCCANS REPORTED

LD232102Y Algiers Domestic Service in Arabic 1900 GMT 23 Mar 78 LD

[Text] The Saharan People's Liberation Army continues its liberation struggle against the invaders of its country. On the 19th and 20th of this month a series of military operations were carried out against the forces of aggression and occupation in the northern and southern fronts.

On 20 March, the fighters attacked the occupation garrison in (Sotuf). After wiping out two of the invaders' posts, they attacked the local prison where there were Saharan detainees, of whom 10 were freed, including small children and women. The revolutionaries captured a large number of weapons and ammunition, killed 18 invading soldiers and wounded others.

On the same day, the Saharan fighters attacked with heavy weapons two Moroccan garrisons in the northern front in (Bouirat) and (Amilchi) in southern Morocco. In this attack 9 of the invading soldiers were killed and 15 wounded and fuel and ammunition depots were blasted. These are in addition to the losses inflicted on the invaders on 19 March in Amgala and the area of Atuila and north of Ain Bin (Tili) where the invaders, under the pressure of the surprise attack by the Saharan fighters, were forced to withdraw and abandon large quantities of weapons and ammunition and the bodies of 21 soldiers and noncommissioned officers.

Further Report on Attacks

LD191045Y Algiers Domestic Service in French 0630 GMT 19 Mar 78 LD

[Summary] The Saharan Democratic Arab Republic Defense Ministry issued a communique yesterday evening on the POLISARIO offensive against the occupation troops in the Western Sahara. During the latest attacks by the Saharan People's Liberation Army, 30 royalist soldiers were killed at Smara, Tifariti and (Tuela). The Saharan fighters launched an assault on several enemy positions, one of which, at Tifariti, was entirely destroyed and twelve of its occupants killed.

Additional Details on Attacks

LD192127Y Algiers Domestic Service in Arabic 1900 GMT 19 Mar 78 LD

[Text] In the last few days the Saharan Liberation Army has launched a number of attacks on the positions of the royal Moroccan occupation forces on the northern front, resulting in the killing of 25 Moroccan royal troops. Saharan insurgents also ambushed royal invading forces 60 km north of the Mauritanian town of Ain Ben Tili, inflicting on them heavy losses in men and equipment.

Meanwhile, Saharan fighters attacked a concentration of invading forces in the Jdiriyah area, killing 14 aggressor troops. Saharan fedayeen also planted mines in regions where fighting is taking place, killing [figure indistinct] royal troops and destroying many vehicles.

BRIEFS

MOROCCAN MINISTER TO U.S.--Rabat, 21 March, MAP--Moussa Saadi, minister of energy and mineral resources, today left for the United States, where he will have talks on cooperation between the United States and Morocco in energy, mining and geology. [Rabat MAP in French 1530 GMT 21 Mar 78 LD]

FRG LOAN TO TUNISIA--West Germany has granted Tunisia a loan of DM70 million to finance the Sidi Sa'd Dam. [Tunis Domestic Service in French 1900 GMT 21 Mar 78 LD]

WEIZMAN INTERVIEWED ON POLITICAL, MILITARY ISSUES

TA240920Y Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew 24 Mar 78 pp 24, 31 TA

[Interview with Defense Minister Weizman by Dov Goldstein 23 March--place not given]

[Text] A fabric of contradictions: to hit the terrorists, on the one hand, but the heartaches to see the many refugees, on the other. Not to leave southern Lebanon until it is guaranteed that the terrorists will not return there, but, who will guarantee? Who will sign the agreement? Who will guarantee it? Israel is entitled to keep the peace of its citizens with all possible means, but, the entire world reproves us and we lose sympathy and friends who have become so few anyway lately...there are more question marks than exclamation points.

[Question] Mr Weizman, it was published and not denied that you had said that "this is a strange war that has rolled beyond what we have planned." What is the meaning of this remark? Were there precise instructions at the political level that were interpreted incorrectly at the military level, or, God forbid, were violated contrary to the government's wish?

[Answer] No, no. Not so. A strange war, certainly a strange war. Every war is strange. To kill people is a strange thing. To get killed is also strange and what is happening in Lebanon is not even war. It is a fight the intentions of which are limited. We had announced in advance that we have no intention to remain in the area and to annex areas to Israel, but intend to enter, act, create a new situation and get out.

The original plan, both the military and political, was to take over a smaller area than what has in fact been taken over. It was not decided in advance how many kilometers we would take, but we surely did not mean the scope that has been created by the needs of reality. The entire subject of the UN Security Council resolution regarding Israel's withdrawal was not affected by the scope of the operation and the dimensions of the territory taken by the IDF. Long before the dimensions were known, already during the first 48 hours of the operation, the United States called for the convening of the UN Security Council.

In the course of the fighting, as has happened many times in Israel's wars, the scope of the operation changed for two reasons: The terrorists' resistance and the continuation of their attempts to hit our soldiers. Village mukhtars asked the IDF to extend its patronage to them. There was a third element: From the moment the intention to send UN forces to southern Lebanon became clear, we thought that an advance toward the Litani River would help the UN force to deploy properly and would improve its chances, from our point of view, to discharge its duty to prevent the return of the terrorists into southern Lebanon. It is a fact that the first crossroads taken over by the UN force upon its entry into the region this week were along the Litani. The entire area, except for the Tyre strip, is clear of terrorists now. This gives the United Nations a better opening position for the prevention of the return of the terrorists into the region. If we had stopped the operation at an earlier stage, when the area was swarming with terrorists, we could not have proved that the terrorists have returned to the region and that the UN force has not fulfilled its job.

[Question] It is still greatly doubted whether the United Nations wants to and can discharge its duty to prevent the terrorists' return to the region.

[Answer] Want--yes. It does want to. From my talks with General Siilasvuo I got the impression that there is a serious intention to prevent the terrorists' return. Can--this cannot be answered in advance. We will leave the best possible conditions for the UN force in the field. There will be no terrorists in the region and the UN force will have control of the Litani bridges. A 4,000-man force can, under these circumstances, fulfill its duty in preventing the terrorists' return to the region.

[Question] What if it does not prevent this? The terrorists will benefit from the situation: the UN force will defend them against the IDF since our freedom of action will be restricted and we will not be able to return to the area due to the presence of the UN soldiers.

[Answer] No, this assumption can be discounted. We will examine, after a while and according to the needs the results in the field. If the UN force does not fulfill its duty the IDF will return to fulfill it. The UN entry is temporary. I believe that the Lebanese Government, aided by its forces, will regain control over southern Lebanon and will be able to shoulder its responsibilities.

We have a strange trait: In every war we stubbornly look for gaps and disagreements and contradictory interpretations between the intentions of the political level and the army's implementation. Let it be clear then: The IDF did not deviate with regard to Lebanon, it did not deviate and did not give liberal interpretations to the decisions on the political level. The chief of staff and I consulted on every move: whether to advance, halt or bombard. We had no differences of opinion. There were cases in which the IDF recommended moving forward while the political level instructed a halt. There were cases in which the IDF recommended halting and the political level instructed an advance. Everything was done with full consultation and understanding, as it should be.

[Question] During the early planning were the complex aspects involved in such a large-scale operation taken into consideration: 150,000 refugees fleeing for fear of the IDF, hundreds, and possibly more, dead and wounded among the civilian population?

[Answer] The entire issue of the IDF entry into a densely populated area is not to the liking of our army. To be responsible for 100,000 and maybe more refugees is a very doubtful pleasure. We have adopted immediate measures to return the refugees to their homes and we are doing all, really all, we can to help them in this difficult process.

One of the crucial considerations in planning this operation was to prevent Syrian involvement in the fighting. The military moves have been basically dictated by this consideration. Therefore, we did not cross the Litani, except for two ambushes laid north of it along the coastal road. We carried out such an operation, on such a scale, without having the Middle East burst or explode, and this was the decisive part in our early planning.

In the initial planning such a large number of refugees was not expected. It is worth remembering that many villages in the region had long been deserted due to the wars raging between the Christians and Moslems. Hundreds of thousands of refugees are in and around Beirut not because the IDF set out to defend Israeli citizens against the murderous terrorists, but because the Moslems and Christians murdered one another. I would say this: Our sensitivity on the issue of refugees is a positive value and I would certainly not recommend that we develop instead the indifference existing among other peoples, among which there are some whose sense of justice is aroused only in connection with things pertaining to us....[paragraph continues]

However, let us not be so strict with ourselves as to be swept up in the other extremity of exaggeration and distortion of reality. The civil war in Lebanon created far more refugees than those resulting from the IDF operation. The Jordanians in September 1975, and the Syrians, upon their entry into Lebanon, massacred far more Palestinians and terrorists than the IDF has over the last 10 days.

The terrorists entered Lebanon and converted a quiet, sympathetic and civilized country into piles of ruins and debris long before an Israeli soldier set foot in the place.

[Question] In the hundreds of talks I have held with you I have never heard you speak so scornfully about Israel's enemies and the Arab soldiers and pilots. As a veteran soldier, do you have pangs of conscience when the IDF uses its most sophisticated planes and artillery, with such power, against enemies that are, at best, equipped with Kalashnikovs and in many cases are totally defenseless?

[Answer] In every war your heart and conscience are involved and you have all sorts of qualms. It is exactly the military people who know the horrors and atrocities of war from close up who are more peace-seeking than others. It is every commander's duty to carry out the tasks without losses or with a minimum of losses among his soldiers. What did we have to do? Should we, because the terrorists have Kalashnikovs, should we have equipped our soldiers with Galil rifles? The terrorists who committed the terrible murder on bloody Saturday, the murder of citizens, small children and women--did they first ask the bus passengers what arms they had at their disposal?

I, as others, have--how should I put it--vacillations of the spirit. This entire business is not pleasant. Sophisticated arms against terrorists--this does not cause elation. I have participated in many battles. I do not experience elation. This is not the liberation of Jerusalem in 1967, nor the feeling of satisfaction I knew when the IDF crossed the Suez Canal in the Yom Kippur war. I visited Lebanese soldiers hospitalized in Israel. I had a very unpleasant feeling, absolutely unpleasant. However, in this incessant war against murderers we have no choice but to deal them a blow with a minimum of losses for us.

[Question] In our severe struggle, which recently has not been too successful with U.S. public opinion, did we consider the serious damage that an operation on this scale could cause us while the prime minister and the foreign minister were facing a serious confrontation with the U.S. administration? Only 2 weeks ago you claimed that "one tractor at An-Nabi Salih would plow through the whole of the United States from an informational point of view." What about 100 tanks?

[Answer] This was considered with great care. It is a fact that reaction in the United Staes was not severe, nor was it loud as is the case with respect to other issues. The Americans understood that we had to act after the murder on the coastal road. They showed an understanding for our need to act in an unusual manner. Our announcement in advance that we had no intention of staying in southern Lebanon permanently and our unilateral declaration of a cease-fire were conducive toward making the U.S. position more calm and understanding.

The Middle East problem does not revolve around the IDF operation but around efforts to achieve a peace agreement with Egypt--however, all the angels of peace cannot expect us not to defend ourselves and let the terrorists shed our blood. The bloody bus was the detonator that ignited our reaction in southern Lebanon. [paragraph continues]

However, for the past 6 months we have been watching the terrorists returning to southern Lebanon not only equipped with Kalashnikovs but with cannons and Katyushas, and they have been devastating the Christian population and planning serious attacks against Israel.

We were warned that the terrorists were planning a serious attack in Israel and that they would try to infiltrate by sea. We took suitable preventive action. However, despite this, that terrible Sabbath came upon us and we had to deal a blow.

The entire issue of southern Lebanon, with all its dramatics, is marginal compared with the serious issue: peace with Egypt. I have grounds--and more--to assume that the Lebanon affair will not cause a break with Egypt and I am saying this because to this very day, and at this very hour, my close ties with General al-Jamasi, the Egyptian minister of war, are continuing. There is a possibility for, and all efforts must be invested in, achieving a peace agreement with Egypt.

[Question] When will the IDF begin to withdraw from southern Lebanon?

[Answer] That depends on the capacity of the UN forces, but within a week the IDF will begin to move back to Israeli territory.

[Question] How long will the withdrawal take?

[Answer] I hope that it can be implemented quickly, without delay. We have a commitment to the welfare of the Christians in southern Lebanon and we will demand that the UN prevent any harm being done to them. I hope that when we withdraw there will not only be a good fence in the north but that we will have a good border. I want the Lebanese to come and work in Israel, to do business in Israel and to receive medical treatment in Israel.

[Question] Have you already drawn conclusions on the basis of the report of the team that examined the events of the "black Sabbath?"

[Answer] No. Not yet. I only received it this morning and I have to read it, study it and think.

[Question] Is it true that on black Sabbath no air force patrol plane was flying in the region where the murderers landed?

[Answer] Not true! The plane flew and the navy ships sailed--despite the unpleasant weather. We must not let a bad spirit take hold of us. Things happened on that Sabbath that should not have happened. I will not hide anything and I will reach all necessary conclusions. If someone has to be punished he will be. In general, I want to tell you that after being out of the IDF for 7 years I have found that after the Yom Kippur war it has been rebuilt in an awe-inspiring manner.

[Question] Are the U.S. correspondents being precise when they describe the talks between President Carter and Prime Minister Begin in Washington as "the hardest and toughest ever to have taken place between a U.S. President and an Israeli prime minister?" Did you get the impression from your talks in the United States that there has been a significant change for the worse in the attitude of the administration, senators and members of Congress?

[Answer] Yes. The talks were very hard. The gaps were so wide. It is very difficult--and I am not sure that at this stage it is possible--to bridge the gaps that have been created. The widest gap has to do with Judaea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip. I tried to clarify to my interlocutors, from the President of the United States to secretaries and administration officials, that Israel will remain in these areas, and that this is acceptable to at least 100 MK's.

To present this sharp confrontation between our concepts and the U.S. demand as a confrontation between Prime Minister Begin and President C..ter, this is both striking a blow at the prime minister, which involves also a great injustice he does not deserve, as well as follishness from the political aspect, which damages the Israeli cause. This is a severe confrontation, a serious one, the like of which Israel has never known, and cannot be compared to any in the past, but it is a confrontation between Israel and the United States on a matter which is for us a matter of survival: the obligation and necessity to prevent a military threat to the existence of Israel from a Palestinian state in Judaea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip. When the United States demands that we withdraw to the 4 July 1967 lines, is this a confrontation between the prime minister and the United States? If someone else headed the government of Israel (except a RAKAH man or one or two other MK's), would he have agreed to such a catastrophe and prevented the confrontation? This is not a matter of one style or another, of one tactic or another--even though we are not innocent of making several mistakes in this area--but a matter of the struggle for our existence. I frankly asked the President of the United States: "How can you demand a total withdrawal? Where will we withdraw to? How will we survive after such a withdrawal?"--he did not have an answer. He did not reply. If President Carter has made up his mind to enter such a severe and dangerous confrontation with Israel, the Israeli response should be a united nation, ready to fight even a friend like the United States, not expressions of butting heads together and erosion in the prime minister's image.

[Question] Do you suppose that such a severe confrontation is expected between the United States and Israel?

[Answer] Unfortunately, it is not expected--the confrontation is already in full swing. We have never known anything like it in severity. This vexes me and hurts me: I have flown from the north back to the center of the country. We passed over the port of Haifa. The Israeli merchant fleet's locked-out ships are a symbol of lack of understanding, of apathy, which has gotten the best of us. Really, I had an awful feeling that we are stuck, like our ships, and that we have forgotten how to raise anchor. In such a state of internal weakness, where everyone tends only to his narrow individual needs, worrying over several hundred more Israeli pounds per month--I fear to say that... Carter increases to a great extent his chances of overcoming the Israelis in the deep confrontation. We must unite, as we had to do in difficult times of crises, in our fight against the British "White Paper" and in our struggle to establish the State.

We are now in a situation similar to the waiting period on the eve of the 6-day war. At that time we thought we were facing one of the greatest struggles for our existence--and we knew how to learn from it and to confront the dangers with a unified political front!

The danger we will be faced with in the short term is military, but we are facing a political confrontation which is more severe and more difficult than a military confrontation. The conclusion must be: A "national peace government" together with the Alinement and the parties already in the coalition--immediately, without delay. Without delay--we must present President Carter with a unified nation and a unified government. We must gather and recruit the best brains, just as the best commanders are recruited on the eve of the outbreak of war.

"The national peace government" will be able to face the strong confrontation with the United States and will strive toward peace with Egypt. All considerations of prestige, whether real or imaginary, should be pushed aside, and the nation must be united under the broadest government.

[Question] Since As-Sadat apparently has not drawn back from any of his demands--including a full withdrawal from Judaea, Samaria, Gaza and even from Jerusalem and the disassembling of Israeli settlements and airports in the Sinai--do you say, once again, that a peace agreement with Egypt is essential and possible? As for its being essential--no one argues with that, but possible? How? Can Israel concede even more than it already has?

[Answer] There is a need to enter new deliberations with Egypt. That is the way, not through U.S. mediation. Atherton's mediating mission did not benefit either Egypt or us. It may have even caused damage and delayed the peace process. We must very seriously clarify with As-Sadat if peace with Egypt can be reached.

There is a limit to the extent and the degree of risks Israel can take upon itself. I told President as-Sadat: "Mr President, I had my first introduction to your armed forces 20 kilometers from Tel Aviv, and I have no intention of renewing that acquaintance!" I also said to him: "You have done a great thing in coming to Jerusalem! A historic deed which carries a chance of changing the Middle East cycle of bloodshed. But, do you really imagine that because of that we can place all our trust in your hands? Today you are president, and tomorrow not. Israel's existence cannot be dependent on you! If you were ready to remove all your armed forces from the Sinai, from very centimeter of the Sinai, I would have been willing to recommend that we withdraw from the entire Sinai and that it should remain demilitarized; but you want to sit on the Mitla and the Jiddi passes and us get out of all of the Sinai?"

For 90 minutes I flew with General al-Jamasi to Aswan, to President as-Sadat. We talked, we talk very freely, as if were were old acquaintances. We analyzed together the events that preceded the 6-day war and the course of the war. The general said to me: "For hours, days, weeks I have thought about the 1967 war. As I went deeper into it, I reached the conclusion that we made a fatal mistake, politically and militarily. An awful mistake." We met President as-Sadat. First I said: Mr President, I have flown to you, flown and flown and flown--and I could not "finish" Egypt. What a giant country you have. If I flew that long eastward I would have long ago covered Israel, Jordan, Iraq and would have reached Baghdad.... We laughed. President as-Sadat understands that beyond the light-hearted language there is here a direct reference to the questions of Israel's security. Just as we are small, they are big, wide, gigantic.

Once, in another talk, President as-Sadat and General al-Jamasi drew the lines in the Sinai for me--where their army will be and where ours will be. I said: "Wait a minute, excuse me gentlemen. Why do you need such defense lines in the Sinai? Against whom?" They said: "Against Israel. To defend the Suez Canal!" I said: "Against Israel. Have we ever threatened the Suez Canal without provocation from you? We are talking about a full-scale peace:"

Listen, at that same talk when I went to President as-Sadat--in Aswan--together with General al-Jamasi and when I told him that I could not "finish" Egypt, I also said to the president: "On the way, Mr Friend al-Jamasi and myself talked about the 6-day war. He told me that it was a fatal mistake on your part. I agree with him, but can you guarantee that in 1987 or in 1997 you will not make the same mistake as in 1967? No, it is not you who will make such a mistake, but another president, another man, another regime.... We cannot risk our safety and the security of our existence. You must understand this!"

My American friends tell me: "Look, As-Sadat gave you everything! He gave you peace!" I told them: "Fine, I respect As-Sadat very much, but you have peace with the Russians, peace with diplomatic relations and with tourism and commerce, you have everything. [paragraph continues]

So what do you need such a large army for? Why do you need an army in Europe? You, the great and mighty, the fantastic United States, you maintain radar stations in Canada and you need them, but we, such a small country, we have to rely on our "Russian," on As-Sadat, to guarantee our wellbeing, and we may not maintain a radar station near Nabulus and in the Sinai?"

I believe that As-Sadat wants peace. We shall not return to the 1967 borders. He knows that, but we must make every effort to renew the talks with him. It is possible. There is no replacement for direct talks.

[Question] As-Sadat is the one who cut off the direct talks. Did Israel not do all it could to renew them?

[Answer] It was possible to do more than Israel did--and not to prefer the talks with the United States. More could have been done than Israel did to overcome the disconnection with President as-Sadat. I believe that even now it is not too late.

COMMENTATOR GUINEY DISCUSSES CARTER-BEGIN RIFT

TA2310447 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 23 Mar 78 p 1 TA

[Erol Guiney commentary]

[Text] The prime minister's talks in Washington were worse than expected. From the outset, it was impossible to expect that a way would be found to resolve the deep differences of opinion between the Carter and Begin governments, however, it could have been assumed that at least a formula would have been found to enable Atherton's mission to continue and to show a hint of progress in Israel-Egypt relations. Prior to Begin's trip, Atherton was convinced that he would return to our region to resume his mission.

One now gains the impression that neither Begin nor Carter displayed any tactical flexibility. Carter turned a deaf ear to Israel's claims. This is a result of the U.S. dependence on Saudi Arabia, its oil and its billions, as well as the hope of using Egypt in its struggle against Soviet-Cuban intervention in Africa.

He also turned a deaf ear, for another reason; when Begin spoke about security with respect to the West Bank. There is a tendency to believe that his positions are based on ideological ties with Judaea and Samaria rather than on real security considerations.

As for Begin, his lack of tactical flexibility has caused Israel, for the first time, to find itself in a crisis not just with the administration but with Congress and a large section of U.S. public opinion. Also, the manner in which Israel dealt with the southern Lebanon issue and the escalation of the military operation to a larger scale did not help to improve things.

No one can say how things will develop. We have had crises in the past in our relations with the United States, but we have never been in a situation in which we have had so few friends and so little support.

It is clear that there are certain limits that the Carter administration will not overstep so that in the future we will get a minimum of military and economic aid. There is, however, an urgent need for this government, this Knesset and for the entire nation to reassess Israel's policy so that it can be directed toward achieving the possible and not the ideal.

LABOR PARTY CONCERNED OVER BEGIN-CARTER TALKS FAILURE

TA231115Y Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1100 GMT 23 Mar 78 TA

[Text] The Labor Party has expressed deep concern at the failure of the prime minister's talks with the President of the United States and at President Carter's statement to members of the U.S. Congress that the negotiations for peace had reached a dead end. The Labor Party decided that there are ways to continue the peace process, and it is impossible to accept that the chance of reaching a political settlement should be missed. The Labor Party's reaction team said that the party will throw all its weight into renewing the negotiations in order to create a new system of relations in the area and to prevent a degeneration into war.

U.S. ATTEMPT TO 'REPLACE BEGIN' ELICITS COMMENT

Jerusalem Sources React

TA232129Y Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 2000 GMT 23 Mar 78 TA

[Text] Sources in Jerusalem this evening expressed wonder and anger at remarks made by a U.S. personality regarding the need to replace Prime Minister Begin for the purpose of continuing the negotiations. This was said to an Israeli personality. This personality said that the remarks he had heard have a bad and dangerous odor of intervention along the lines of the CIA interventions aimed at overthrowing regimes in the world. Israel, he said, rejects with disgust such an approach. As may be recalled, the U.S. personality said, among other things, that an alternative to the government in Israel should be created and that such an alternative should be found within the Likud with the participation of the Democratic Movement for Change.

Political Leaders Comment

TA232258Y Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 2200 GMT 23 Mar 78 TA

[Excerpts] MK Yig'al Allon said that the Americans have no right to advise us as to who will be a prime minister. He opposes Begin's policy, but not because of Washington's position.

Transport Minister Me'ir 'Amit refused to refer to the subject. He said that it is doubtlessly worrisome that the negotiations are making no progress, and this necessitates a thorough discussion in the Democratic Movement for Change. Such a discussion will, however, not be held before the DMC ministers hear more details from the prime minister about his talks in Washington. Two DMC Knesset members, Mordekhay Virshubski and Toledano, demanded that the movement's council discuss a withdrawal from the coalition because of the government's policy.

The head of the MAFDAL Knesset faction, MK Yehuda Ben-Me'ir, said that the Americans are trying to overthrow the government and this is an old tactic. The MAFDAL, he said, stands like a wall behind the government.

MK Porush from Agudat Yisra'el said that his faction supports Mr Begin, who represents a position supported by the majority of the Knesset members. Basically, he said, there is no difference between the opposition and the coalition regarding most of the U.S. demands.

MK Yosi Sarid totally rejected the U.S. attempts to intervene in Israeli politics.

Dayan Denies Remark Made

TA240657Y Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0500 GMT 24 Mar 78 TA

[Text] Foreign Minister Moshe Dayan has said that he has not heard a U.S. source say, or even hint, that the Americans, or any particular American, b lieves that the government in Israel should be replaced. He told our political correspondent Sara Frankel that if anyone is trying to hint that such remarks were made to one of the members of the delegation, that person is consciously lying.

LATE REPORT: WEIZMAN ON 'PEACE GOVERNMENT,' U.S. VIEW OF BEGIN

TA241305Y Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1140 GMT 24 Mar 78 TA

[Interview with Defense Minister 'Ezer Weizman by Sara Frankel on 24 March at Ben-Gurion Airport--recorded]

[Text] [Question] Mr Defense Minister, you said in interviews to the press that you propose that a national peace government be established together with the Alinement. What did you mean exactly by a national peace government?

[Answer] First of all, I did not say together with the Alinement, I said with whoever wished to join--and this certainly includes the Alinement. Secondly, of course, I am referring to a national unity government with its main purpose being that of a peace government, and I was pleased to hear that the prime minister--as is usual with him--favors a unity government. I think, assess and recommend that as the people of Israel face the difficulties that we are facing--that we have already faced in the past, such as on the eve of the 6-day war--Menahem Begin should stand as prime minister of Israel on a broad political front.

[Question] Since you used the term, a national peace government, and you said that the government had not done enough to advance the negotiations, can your remarks be interpreted as saying that this government is not a peace government.

[Answer] No, no. Don't start with commentaries by Rashi [11th century Biblical commentator]. I have an opinion on certain issues which could have been conducted. These are not cardinal issues. It is a fact that it is possible to make contact with the Egyptians. I think that what has happened in the past 4 months after 30 years of war--As-Sadat's move and our prime minister's move to bring about a rapprochement between us and the Egyptians--is a major historic move and every effort should be made to hold on to it. Therefore, I think that this government--more or less broadly based--must be a government whose main mission--I won't say only mission--is the advancement of peace settlements between us and Egypt.

[Question] In your opinion, should the government try to achieve a dialog with the Egyptians without U.S. aid?

[Answer] Look, the answer is yes, but I do not want to elaborate over the radio prior to my sitting with the government and saying what I think. Therefore, if that's it for today I wish you a happy Sabbath.

[Question] Mr Defense Minister, sir, I cannot end a conversation with you without asking for your opinion on what has been attributed to an anonymous U.S. personality to the effect that there is a need to replace the prime minister. What is your opinion?

[Answer] In my opinion it borders on a scandal that a foreign government should make a statement on who should be prime minister. Menahem Begin was elected by the Knesset, he was elected by the majority of the residents of the State of Israel. He is the prime minister and I wish and hope that he may be the prime minister who will bring the peace settlements.

BEGIN: ISRAEL REFUSES TO APPROVE STATEMENT ON TALKS

TA232231Y Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 2200 GMT 23 Mar 78 TA

[Excerpt] Speaking with Israeli reporters prior to his departure for New York, the prime minister said that no joint communique was issued at the conclusion of this talks with President Carter since no agreement on its content had been reached. The Americans submitted a draft for the joint statement but the Israeli side refused to approve it. Therefore, it was agreed that no statement would be issued.

As for the continuation of the contacts, the prime minister said that the negotiations with Egypt regarding the declaration of principles continue via the U.S. mediation. It is possible that Washington will offer a formula of its own for the declaration of principles. So far, the United States has not announced when its special ambassador, Alfred Atherton, will resume his mission.

BEGIN INTERVIEWED PRIOR TO DEPARTURE FROM U.S.

TA231855Y Jerusalem Domestic Television in Hebrew 1900 GMT 23 Mar 78 TA

[From the Evening Newsreel]

[Text] Our correspondent in the United States, Dan Shilon, talked with the prime minister a few hours before his departure for Israel. [begin videotape]

[Question] Mr Prime Minister, did your visit achieve what you defined upon arrival here as the renewal of U.S. support for the peace plan you brought here in December?

[Answer] To a certain extent, yes. I understand that the U.S. President also said yesterday, before a congressional committee, that our plan is a serious, constructive plan. He especially praised the autonomy plan for the Eretz Yisra'el Arabs in Judaea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip. He also reiterated to me that the presentation of the plan was a courageous act. Well then, to a certain extent there are now renewed expressions of support.

However, I want to tell the Israeli citizens something pertaining to the political situation, as I have seen it. Since I brought our peace plan, the two parts of our peace plan, to the U.S. President on 16 and 17 December and received acknowledgement of it from many elements in the Senate, Congress and so on and so forth--over the last 2 months, all the praise I heard then has disappeared and gone silent. This is why I address every friend of ours and tell him: It is impossible to put up with the fact that there is a peace plan--Israel is the only country that has presented a detailed plan, consisting of two parts, to which we have now added the draft declaration of principles--which is not being discussed and not being negotiated. Its contents are not being publicized. Therefore, this is why I dwell on this before the Press Club, simply in order to point up our proposals. Life is very busy and things are forgotten.

[Question] How do you explain the change taking place here over the last 2 months?

[Answer] There are always changes in policy, namely, there are always influences that we ordinary mortals cannot foresee. A word to the wise is sufficient.

[Question] U.S. statesmen depicted the results of your visit and the visit itself rather grimly. Do you agree with this assessment?

[Answer] I will tell the citizens of Israel openly and frankly that the talks were difficult. They were conducted frankly and candidly. Each party stated his positions. There are subjects on which a certain degree of agreement has been reached. These things may not be publicized immediately; they will be learned in due time. There are certain subjects on which each of us has adhered to his views with full knowledge of the differences of opinion. I think that no other way has been open to us.

[Question] Can you perhaps repeat for us, in general terms, the present bones of contention between us and the United States?

[Answer] No, I think I had better not go into detail. I only want to emphasize the following: We have the problem of the Arabs of Eretz Yisra'el. This problem is called the Palestinian problem. The U.S. President absolutely objects to the establishment of a Palestinian state. This is very important. However, there are different proposals, both here and in other countries which, it is stressed, are not aimed at a Palestinian state but, nevertheless, because of the responsibility we shoulder, it is incumbent on us to say: These proposals will lead to a Palestinian state, even if others promise us that this is not their intention. I believe this is not their intention, but after all it is we who live in (?Eretz Yisra'el), we know the reality. For people in different countries this is an important policy problem. For us it is a question of life and death.

Therefore, we exercise extreme care here and incessantly analyze every possibility. When we encounter a conclusion, or even a proposal, with a different name or form, but which surely constitutes, according to our analysis, the danger of leading to a Palestinian state, we say: Pardon, this proposal is unacceptable and its wording cannot be accepted either. We (?reject) and say what we have said in the peace plan. You should know Mr Shilon: we never settle for just a no. If a no should be said, it should be bravely said. After we hear a plan which we consider dangerous, we always propose a positive plan. We have proposed the autonomy plan which solves the problem both of the natives of Eretz Yisra'el from the point of view of their security and of the Arabs of Eretz Yisra'el from the point of view of conducting their daily lives. This is a very positive proposal. Incidentally, today I have heard praise for it. It should be negotiated on. This we have explained.

[Question] With your permission sir, something about political tactics. Looking back, was your visit here in December justified after Israel had in fact attained direct negotiations with Egypt? Your visit may have theoretically and also practically returned the ball to the court of the United States.

[Answer] No, that was not the intent, nor was this the conclusion or the result. I traveled, with the agreement of my colleagues, to the United States in order to bring our peace plan to the President and to the Congress. Why did I do this? For a very simple reason. It is true that I could travel to Ismailia directly and hand it to President as-Sadat; however, everybody would agree that U.S. support is very important and I wanted to gain this support. I think this was a precept in the full sense of the word. You formulate a certain plan and before you take it to the other party you obtain U.S. support. This effort succeeded. I got support. I already quoted remarks that were made publicly. There are also remarks that were made behind closed doors, remarks that have not been publicized. What then? A change has taken place over the last 2 months and our plan has not been talked about since. I am now trying to revive it, to regain support for it. I hope this will be possible.

[Question] But, did not that visit create a situation that gave As-Sadat the feeling that in turning to the Americans you were in fact asking for U.S. pressure on Egypt?

[Answer] God forbid. I was very careful to avoid telling President as-Sadat in Ismailia that the Americans supported this plan, in order not to make him feel that I was bringing to him a certain degree of [word indistinct] pressure. I might have mentioned to him in one of the talks that this plan met with understanding in the United States, not that we had support. I also did not want to bind the President. He said important and positive things but I told him I did not want to commit him. Therefore, we in fact agreed on a general definition: a fair basis for negotiations. It is very important to say not only the word basis, but the words a fair basis. I settled for that. The support itself was, however, very important.

[Question] Sir, in view of the change that has taken place over the last few months, a change you have mentioned, is it possible to obtain the future support of the U.S. administration, Congress and public opinion without changing Israeli policy?

[Answer] What does without changing mean? Israel's policy is a peace policy. We have a peace plan and we ask that it be a fair basis for negotiations. Negotiations, among other things, mean that the other party submits counterproposals and so on. I think that it is certainly possible to receive U.S. support, although perhaps not for every detail. It is a fact that we did receive it.

[Question] Sir, before your arrival here and in the wake of the defense minister's visit it was publicized that the settlements would be halted until after your visit to the United States. What will happen now?

[Answer] I will give a report. We have not halted the settlements. It is not exactly like that. There was a point when houses were to be built and the defense minister, prior to his departure, had instructed the cessation of this work. We consulted with him. We did not want to cancel his instructions against his will. When I return, the government will discuss this entire problem. Certain decisions have already been made and we will link into them. What I basically want to say--I have already said this to the U.S. television--with all due respect, is that the U.S. position is that our settlements are illegal and constitute an obstacle to the peace negotiations, but our view is different. They constitute no obstacle and are totally legitimate. This is our position and it has not changed after the talks of the last 2 days.

[Question] Mr Prime Minister, the domestic hardships existing in Israel today, also perhaps inside the cabinet to a certain extent--do they harm the peace process, do they harm and disturb the political processes?

[Answer] Any hardship causes disturbances. I hope that we will overcome the difficulties. After all, the subject in question is a democratic country and a democratic government which consists of a coalition. Therefore, it always has difficulties. I would like to ask you whether there has ever been a coalition without difficulties. We also have them. There is, however, reason to believe that we will overcome them.

[Question] Do you think, sir, that the Israeli public supports the government's policy today the way it supported it a few months ago, for example?

[Answer] I cannot say, but support does exist. The public supports the peace policy as I can see everywhere I go. It should not be forgotten that the public is represented by the Knesset. The Knesset has given its support for this plan with a majority of 64 to 9.

This is an enormous majority. I think that this support continues. If there is a new development, we will not [word indistinct].

[Question] Sir, before you left the country, you were quoted as saying that after your return you would make renovations, possibly also in the cabinet. Could you tell us what you meant?

[Answer] I did not say renovations. I said the following: The present government has had two periods--a 6-month period and one of nearly 2 and 1/2 months. During the first period the government functioned well in all respects. Over the last 2 months there has been disorder. This is what I said and I am repeating it. What should be done to put things back in order? This is not a crucial disorder but it should be set right. I think that things should be put right and I intend to do this, with the help of my colleagues.

[Question] Mr Prime Minister, we thank you very much. [end videotape]

BEGIN RETURNS FROM U.S., MAKES STATEMENT

TA241313Y Jerusalem Domestic Service in English 1200 GMT 24 Mar 78 TA

[Statement by Prime Minister Menahem Begin at Ben-Gurion Airport on 24 March on his return from the United States--recorded]

[Text] The talks in Washington were difficult talks. We faced several demands which we could not accept and so we said. Certainly it is easier--it is easy indeed--to accept demands put out by the Government of the United States--the mighty United States and our great friend and ally, but the representatives of Israel, the foreign minister and I and our advisers, felt deeply that we are dealing with matters concerning the future of the nation and the lives of our children. In every conversation we felt this difference--to everyone else, including the United States Government, the problems on the agenda are of policy--important policy; to us they are problems of life, of existence and of making sure our future. With this knowledge of the difference we were in a position on certain issues to find immediate agreement. They cannot yet be divulged, but one day they will be known, which is a very positive development. On certain other issues we shall continue our clarifications, and there are problems on which we could not say yes because we represent a small nation fighting for its survival.

May I tell you also that I had a meeting with the representatives of the Jewish community. It was a most heartening encounter I myself experienced. People came from all over America--from coast to coast, representing scores of communities, and the spirit was that of faith, of standing together with strong hearts and of defending the most vital interests of the Jewish state. I heard the speech made by the chairman of the president's conference--the representative body of the Jewish community in America--Rabbi Alexander Schindler. For many years didn't I listen to such a speech imbued with faith, high morale and a readiness to do whatever is necessary with and around Israel. They gave us great courage yesterday in New York. We, too, contributed something to the spirit of standing together which now prevails among our brethren in the United States of America.

There will be further contacts on various issues and I do hope that as a result the peace-making process will not stop but, on the contrary, will continue. Israel will always make efforts for the sake of peace and I do believe that ultimately, despite all the difficulties, peace will be achieved in the Middle East.

Answers Newsmen's Questions

TA241249Y Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1055 GMT 24 Mar 78 TA

[Press conference by Prime Minister Menahem Begin at Ben-Gurion Airport on 24 March--live]

[Text] [passage indistinct]

[Mostly indistinct question on report that a U.S. representative told an Israeli official the government in Israel should be replaced]

[Begin] I would prefer to read this report first. I do not know who the diplomatic representative is. I want to say that it is the people of Israel who elect the prime minister of Israel and not a U.S. representative. [applause]

[Shalom Qital] Mr Prime Minister, today, while your were on your way to Israel, two interviews with the defense minister were published in which he calls for the establishment of a national peace government at this time. How do you relate to such a proposal?

[Begin] Again, I have not read the remarks of my friend, the defense minister. If he is talking about a peace government then one already exists. The government in which the defense minister serves is a peace government. However, if he is referring to the establishment of a national unity government--I have always been in favor of a national unity government and I am in favor of one today.

[Qital] In your opening remarks you said that you hope that the negotiating process will continue. How will it continue?

[Begin] Along all the paths at our disposal. I owe an answer to President as-Sadat's second letter, which I received prior to my departure for the United States, and I announced that when I returned I would answer him. I intend to do so next week. This is a certain tie between Israel and Egypt. There are other ties between Israel and Egypt. In addition to this there is a move involving ties between the United States and Israel and Egypt. We will follow all these paths in order to renew the negotiations.

[Yosi La'or] Mk Shim'on Peres has already reacted to the defense minister's remarks and has spoken about the possibility of setting up a national unity government. He said that first of all a joint peace plan has to be created for the present government and the opposition. Do you think that there is a need to consider a new Israeli peace policy?

[Begin] I think that the Israeli Government has a clear peace policy. However, if the leader of the opposition has proposals we will certainly discuss them. Let him bring them, we will sit and consider them. I do not believe that in order to establish a national unity government the peace policy of the government which was elected by the nation and by the Knesset has to be changed. However, we will discuss in all seriousness any proposal brought before us.

[Mostly indistinct question on belief in the United States that the chances of peace have decreased]

[Begin] I said that the talks were difficult and I repeat that opinion. As for whether they failed or whether sweetness will come from them--it is better to wait.

[Golan] Secretary Vance spoke about three U.S. documents on the peace negotiations. Did the United States submit U.S. documents to Israel for an American peace?

[Begin] No.

[Mostly indistinct question in English about call for Begin's replacement]

[Begin--in English] I have already answered in Hebrew when I was asked a similar question. The prime minister of Israel, sir, is being elected by the people of Israel, not by any diplomatic representative of the American administration.

[Mostly indistinct question in English about 'Ezer Weizman's proposal to establish a national peace government]

[Begin--in English] Again I already answered this question in Hebrew. I have now become a kind of interpreter but I don't mind to translate to English whatever I said in Hebrew. I haven't read the statement made by my friend and colleague, the defense minister, but if he says that it is necessary to form a peace government I will say that there is a peace government in Israel--exactly the government in which the defense minister is the defense minister; but if he meant to say that there should be a government of national unity, I have always been for such a government. Whether in opposition or in office--and I am still for it.

[Mostly indistinct question by Italian correspondent in English asking for an elaboration on the demands submitted by the U.S. administration]

[Begin--in English--indistinct due to superimposed Hebrew translation: "For the time being I will stand by my previous statement. I am not prepared to add to it."]

[Mostly indistinct question in English on whether Begin feels that there is a crisis within his government]

[Begin--in English] I just arrived and I will do my best to put our house in order. But I just arrived, I can't do it while answering your questions.

[Mostly indistinct question in English on how the peace efforts will continue]

[Begin--in English] No, I don't think so. To the contrary, we also agree that the search for peace will continue and all efforts will be made, either in direct contacts between Israel and Egypt, between Israel and the United States, or in direct contacts through the good offices of the United States.

[Mostly indistinct question in English about Israel's peace plans]

[Begin--in English] Not at all. We have a peace policy. We elaborated and produced a peace plan. I gave the details of it yesterday in my speech in the National Press Club--perhaps it has already been published in the Israeli press. The main point is how to revive the support of public opinion in the United States and elsewhere in the peace plan which exists of the State of Israel. We will start negotiating the documents we produced--three of them--regarding the autonomy of the residents of Judaea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip, on the bilateral relations between Egypt and Israel and the declaration of principles. Then of course that will mean that we pursue peace and the efforts continue.

[Mostly indistinct question in English about the future of the peace process]

[Begin--in English] Again I will become an interpreter from Hebrew into English but I don't have any recriminations. I got two letters from President as-Sadat. The second I didn't yet have time to reply to and I promised President as-Sadat that I will write to him after my return home which I did just now. Next week I will really write to him. That is a contact between Egypt and Israel. There are other contacts between Egypt and Israel and, of course, contacts between the American Government and the Government of Israel and of Egypt will continue. So there are many avenues to continue in the peace effort which will continue.

DAYAN RETURNS FROM U.S., TALKS TO NEWSMEN

TA231557Y Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1510 GMT 23 Mar 78 TA

[From the Afternoon Newsreel]

[Text] There was no hint on the part of the Americans about pressures or means they will exert and adopt against us if we do not accept their views. This was said about an hour ago by Foreign Minister Dayan on his return from the talks with the heads of the U.S. administration. The foreign ministers said that there are differences of opinion between the United States and us, but emphasized that it is impossible to compare today's situation regarding our relations with the United States to difficult situations which existed in the past. Our correspondent 'Adi Talmor was at the airport. He brings us the remarks by Foreign Minister Dayan: [begin recording]

[Dayan] There are differences of opinion but there was no hint whatsoever by the Americans about any pressures of any kind that could make things difficult for us if we do not accept--and we do not accept--the U.S. positions on various subjects. There is certainly no room for comparison between the present situation and past difficult situations. I was a partner in different periods since 1956--in the Sinai period and other periods, such as the period of the reassessment. There was no hint of what is called here U.S. pressures. There was total clarity regarding questions on which we are divided.

[Talmor] The foreign minister avoided drawing conclusions about the talks in the United States. Moshe Dayan said that it was the prime minister's visit and when he returns it will be he who will report to the government and the public about the results of the talks. Yet, is the foreign minister encouraged by the talks in the United States at this stage?

[Dayan] There are basic differences of opinion, first between us and the Arabs, and primarily between us and the Egyptians. Neither we nor the Americans want the talks halted. We want the talks to continue and we want to reach an understanding. The question facing us is how to cope with the differences of opinion. As a result of the differences of opinion between us and the Egyptians, there are surely also differences of opinion between us and the Americans regarding the positions Israel should adopt to close the gap dividing us and the Egyptians. This was the major issue. I cannot say that the differences of opinion have been settled in full.

[Talmor] If both parties, namely, Israel and Egypt, want the peace negotiations to continue, Dayan concluded, the way for that will be found. [end recording]

DAYAN COMMENTS ON ISRAEL-U.S. RELATIONS, PEACE PROCESS

TA232226Y Jerusalem Domestic Television Service in Hebrew 1900 GMT 23 Mar 78 TA

[Text] Foreign Minister Dayan, who has returned to Israel, said this evening that the present crisis in the relations between Israel and the United States is not the worst crisis we have ever known. Today's situation cannot at all be compared to the crises in Ben-Gurion's time and during the withdrawal from the Sinai [in 1956]. The foreign minister returned to Israel this afternoon and said that he came home early since the official talks in Washington ended yesterday. Mr Dayan added that he did not feel any direct or indirect pressure from the Americans. He talked with our correspondent Nissim Mish'al near his house in Zahala. [begin videotape]

[Dayan] The talks with the Americans were detailed and clarified the points on which agreement exists between us and those on which there is no agreement. There are certainly quite a few important points on which there is no agreement between the United States and Israel. I would not say that the talks failed. I would say that the talks were clear and frank, like friendly talks. There are, however, differences of opinion regarding their substance.

[Question] Could it be said that the political negotiations have come to a dead end?

[Answer] I would not say that the political negotiations are not being conducted between us and the United States. The political negotiations are between us and the Egyptians. The U.S. problem is how to bring about the continuation of these negotiations and how to have them attain positive results, if possible. We have heard criticism of several Israeli positions on this issue. It is possible that criticism is also being leveled at the Egyptians for their positions. However, there are no differences of opinion between Israel and the United States on policy questions between Israel and the United States. It is a question of differences of opinion dividing us and Egypt that the United States, like us, wants settled to that the negotiations can succeed. It is on this matter that we have differences of opinion with the Americans.

[Question] Have you felt any U.S. pressure?

[Answer] Absolutely not, neither indirectly nor by way of hints. There were differences of opinion but we were in no way told that if we did not do what the Americans want that they will harden their attitude toward us. There was nothing of the kind in the talks, at least not in any of the talks in which I participated.

[Question] Can you pinpoint the differences of opinion--what did they center on?

[Answer] They centered on the issues existing between the Egyptians and us. First and foremost, the issues of Judaea and Samaria, or the West Bank--about Egypt's demand that Israel undertake to withdraw from these areas, about the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, and questions connected with this, such as the settlements question. Also the formal question of the framework of the positions, which is the declaration of principles. Everything centered on these subjects.

[Question] Mr Dayan, what next? What in your opinion will the next stage be?

[Answer] I believe that there will be an effort on our part, on the U.S. part and hopefully also on Egypt's part. I hope so very much since we have no direct contact with the Egyptians. What we know about the Egyptians is through the Americans. If the Egyptians indeed want, as the Americans say, to reach a peace agreement and to continue the negotiations, the next stage will be an attempt on the part of all sides--the sides being Israel and Egypt--through U.S. mediation, they are not a party to this of course--to overcome the differences of opinion, and the talks should not be halted. [end videotape]

FOREIGN MINISTRY SPOKESMAN CLARIFIES DAYAN REMARKS

TA232235Y Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 2200 GMT 23 Mar 78 TA

[Text] The Foreign Ministry spokesman made it clear that contrary to what has been reported, the foreign minister did not say that a crisis currently exists in relations between Israel and the United States. Mr Dayan only referred to past crises.

LEBANESE CHRISTIAN FORCES FIRE ON UN VANGUARD

TA231630Y Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1600 GMT 23 Mar 78 TA

[Text] The Christians in southern Lebanon opened fire over the heads of the UN vaguard forces this afternoon. They were on their way to the ('Aqayya) bridge, which crosses the Litani River. Our military correspondent reported that at noon the Christians, assisted by tanks, blocked the Iranian column's path, but cleared the road after IDF officers intervened. After the column began moving, the Christians fired over the heads of the UN personnel for several moments. No one was hurt.

SITUATION OF UN FORCES IN S. LEBANON REPORTED

TA231909Y Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1705 GMT 23 Mar 78 TA

[From the Evening Newsreel]

[Excerpts] The UN personnel who were supposed to reach southern Lebanon today were delayed. The convoy of the Swedish battalion from the Sinai did not arrive, and it is doubtful if the French battalion has covered the distance between Beirut and Tyre.

The UN forces' vanguard reached the Lebanese village of Ra's an-Naqurah in the afternoon to take positions on the western front of the border. The stationing took place quietly. From the village of Ra's an-Naqurah, here is a report from our correspondent Yo'el Dar:

Dozens of Canadian soldiers who comprise the vanguard arrived at their new station through the border passage at Rosh Haniqrah. The blue berets who came from the Israeli side of the border settled in a special UN building. The building itself, located at the entrance to the village, has been renovated and repainted over the past few days, after having been damaged during the fighting. Remnants of the damage and destruction are still scattered here and there.

Earlier, we were informed that French soldiers were supposed to take positions on the western front of the border. However, information that reached the village of Ra's an-Naqurah from the Lebanese side said that the French soldiers could not carry out the plan to take positions on that front because of the strong objection of the Christians in that area of Lebanon. The French soldiers were forced to return to the city of Beirut. Perhaps this is why Canadian soliders from the Israeli side were transferred to Ra's an-Naqurah. It should be noted that nobody awaited the UN soldiers in the village of Ra's an-Naqurah, except for several IDF soldiers stationed on that front. The majority of the villagers of Ra's an-Naqurah have fled north, and those who remained are still shutting themselves up in their houses and prefer not to be too conspicious. At the sight of the new, run-down base, one Canadian soldier told me that he hoped that he will not have to remain here for long. [end recording]

SOME IDF FORCES RETURN FROM SOUTHERN LEBANON

TA231743Y Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1705 GMT 23 Mar 78 TA

[From the Evening Newsreel]

[Text] The IDF forces in southern Lebanon are continuing the thinning-out process and several units have already returned to their bases. Our correspondent reports that the one-sided observance of the cease-fire by our forces has continued on all fronts in southern Lebanon; our forces did not fire back, even though there were several shellings both in southern Lebanon and in the Galilee finger today.

IDF DENIES AIR FORCE OPERATED IN LEBANON 23 MAR

TA231905Y Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1800 GMT 23 Mar 78 TA

[Excerpt] The IDF spokesman denied a REUTER report that air force planes flew in southern Lebanon today.

The soldiers of the Iranian force established their first position in the afternoon today, a few hundred meters from the ('Aqayah) bridge on the Litani and flew the UN flag over it.

GUR DENIES REPORTED IRAQI FORCE IN LEBANON

TA240737Y Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0503 GMT 24 Mar 78 TA

[From the Morning Newsreel]

[Excerpts] Chief of Staff Lt Gen Mordekhay Gur has dispelled reports that an Iraqi force has arrived in Lebanon via Syria to aid the terrorists in southern Lebanon. The chief of staff made these remarks in a special interview with our correspondent Yehezqel Hame'iri. [begin recording]

[Question] Chief of staff, is htere any truth to the reports that Iraqi troops are streaming toward the border with Lebanon? How do you relate to them?

[Answer] In order for Iraqi troops to get to the border with Lebanon they would have to cross several countries on their way. So there are no Iraqi forces on their way to Lebanon. The Iraqis organized supply convoys to the terrorists. These convoys have arrived. I assume that these supplies have been distributed, but Iraqi troops are not on the move.

[Question] Retrospectively, can you state that all the aims and purposes of the assault were achieved?

[Answer] Any military operation is of value if a political achievement comes in its wake. In the history of border operations--sometimes retaliation, sometimes reaction, sometimes operations of another nature--there have been those that brought about greater changes and there have been those that brought about smaller changes. I think that there is room to assume that in the wake of the latest operation--the Litani operation--a change will take place along the State of Israel's northern border, and to hope that this will be a change for the better. [end recording]

AFGHANISTAN

COMMERCE MINISTER JALALLAR, DELEGATION VISITING PRC

For Peking NCNA reportage on the visit by Commerce Minister Mohammad Khan Jalallar and the delegation he is heading to the People's Republic of China, see the International Affairs section of the 23 March issue and subsequent issues of the People's Republic of China DAILY REPORT.

BANGLADESH

AFP REPORTS SIGNS OF RIFT IN AWAMI LEAGUE

BK231609Y Hong Kong AFP in English 1520 GMT 23 Mar 78 BK

[By Golam Tahaboor]

[Text] Dacca, March 23 (AFP)--A rift appears to be inevitable in Bangladesh's biggest single political party, the Awami League of the late Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, because of personality conflicts among present party leaders.

A strongly worded statement by newly-elected Awami League Secretary Abour Razak, 35, accusing party President Abdul Malik Ukil of violating party decisions was prominently carried by today's Dacca newspapers to the surprise of readers. Mr Razak, known to be a staunch follower of Sheikh Mujib, who was killed in the August 1975 military coup, in his statement bitterly criticised his chief, Mr Malik Ukil, for unilaterally announcing 27 names of new Working Committee members last week in violation of an earlier decision of the party. He claimed that President Malik, according to the decision, was to announce names of 63 Working Committee members later this week only after approval by first vice-president Mrs Zohora Tajuddin and by Secretary Razak in accordance with the revised party constitution. A new list of 63 names of Working Committee members was issued to the press last night under the joint signatures of Mrs Tajuddin and Mr Razak, believed to represent the majority anti-Malik Ukil faction of the party. The lists have 15 names in common.

Mr Malik Ukil, a former speaker and minister in Sheikh Mujib's government, and Mr Razak, a former chief of the Awami League's volunteer corp, were elected president and secretary at a party council session in Dacca early this month. Mr Razak was released from jail by a court order late last January after detention for about 2 and a half years since the August 1975 coup.

Signs of division among the leadership were prominent when the council session with 5,000 councillors and delegates opened in Dacca on March 3, but last-minute parleys under pressure for unity by party workers saved the Awami League from a breakaway and a compromise panel was passed in a quick half-hour session in the closing session of the 3-day council.

Mrs Zohora Tajuddin, who has been heading the Awami League as governor since it was allowed to operate "indoors" like other parties in 1976 under martial law regulation (PPR), was a contender for the post of party president. But she was made number one vice-president in a compromise move in a council meeting.

Mr Razak, in his statement, expressed surprise at Mr Malik Ukil's violation of the party decision and asked how could he send an "altogether different list" ignoring the one accepted unanimously. He also expressed surprise to see some names in the president's list of people "who were far away from the party in the crucial period of the last 2 and a half years." The list, he alleged, included some persons who were known for their hobnobbing with those responsible for Sheikh Mujib's killing.

Mr Razak alleged that Mr Malik Ukil was accepted as party chief in the last council meeting as a compromise candidate in the greater interests of the Awami League without naming Mrs Zohora Tajuddin, wife of one of four Awami League ministers killed in Dacca jail following the November 1975 counter coup. Mr Razak said "it was well known whom the majority of council members wanted as party president."

Despite differences between two apparently divided factions of the Awami League, one headed by Mr Malik Ukil and the other by Mrs Tajuddin and Mr Razak, some political observers think continuing pressure from councillors and workers may prevent the two warring groups from immediately announcing a formal breakup in the next [words indistinct].

INDIA

TEXT OF DESAI REPORT ON FIRST YEAR IN OFFICE

BK231544Y Delhi ISI in English 1437 GMT 23 Mar 78 BK

[Text of Prime Minister Morarji Desai's report to nation]

[Text] A year ago on March 24, 1977, I took the oath of office as the prime minister of India. Normally an anniversary has no special significance. But in the context of the historic change that took place on this very day last year it becomes a special occasion for a stocktaking. This is indispensable from the point of view of accountability of the government to the people.

Public memory is proverbially short and many of us today tend to forget the long dark night which had descended on this country during the emergency. The basic issues on which we secured the popular mandate affected the very springs of democracy. Those who had caused pollution of these springs are facing investigations and will soon have to face the bar of public opinion depending on the results of the investigations. It is, however, necessary to recall these issues to realise how soon the Janata government has undone much of this legacy of vandalism of the constitution under the impressive mandate given to it by the people. The fundamental rights and seven freedoms enshrined in the constitution had been severely curtailed, the judiciary had been made subservient, the press gagged. Public opinion had become vitiated, corruption and nepotism had become rampant and the rule of law had ceased to exist. The freedom that we had won with so much sacrifice and suffering had been made to depend on the whims and interests of a coterie during the former regime. The nation's economy was in doldrums, production was falling, public money was being spent on unessential activities and prices were rising.

The first task before the Janata government was to remove the shackles that had been put on the citizen and his freedoms. All curbs on the political parties have been removed. The right of association has been fully restored. No longer need an Indian fear the midnight knock which meant long months in detention without knowing the charges and without legal redress. The executive no longer casts its shadow on the judiciary. The curbs that had been imposed on the jurisdiction of the courts have been removed. Once again the judiciary has become the true guarantor of the citizens' rights under the constitution and the preserver of the spirit and letter of the constitution itself.

A free press, as history has repeatedly shown, is the sentinel of a true democracy. We had lost it but have now regained it. The statute book has been cleansed of that black act, the Prevention of Publication of Objectionable Matters Act. The curbs on reporting of the proceedings of parliament have been repealed. Even in the officially owned media Akashwani [All-India Radio] and Doordarshan [television] there is no bar to criticism of the government and all parties were allowed freely to make their appeals to the electorate.

In fact, proposals are now being studied to give them all possible autonomy. True to the model of a police state that India had become during the emergency, the rights of the industrial workers had been suppressed and the trade unions were put under a leash. Their rights have now been restored. Part of their incomes which had been held in abeyance have been restored. The dearness allowance is being paid to them as and when admissible.

The mandate of the people of our government was two-fold: political and economic. In a word it connoted the attainment of freedom from fear and want. Under the mandate it is incumbent on us to ensure that the mass of our people develop and really enjoy the benefits of development--especially our rural masses. From our predecessors we inherited an unprecedented inflation and a larger number of unemployed. We have managed to contain inflation and while a general rise in prices could not be avoided it was kept below the previous years. In fact, most wholesale prices are now below the level of 12 months earlier. This was achieved by curbing wasteful public expenditure, by regulating the money supply and, where necessary, by importing to make up for the shortages. Food production touched a new record and the efficiency of the distribution system has been improved so that the people are able to get their essential needs at reasonable prices. We have also evolved our long term economic policy in line with our mandate. The economic policy statement and industrial policy statement indicate our economic philosophy. It is a philosophy of growth of distributive justice and of adjustment to our indigenous needs and conditions. Naturally, it took some time to evolve the details. But now that our ideas have crystalized, we do not want to lose any time and are fully geared to go ahead. The annual plan for 1978-79 and the draft 5-year plan 1978-83 both constitute our credentials and our faith.

We have had planning for more than 25 years but have not been able to achieve the desired measure of growth. Forty percent of our population is below the poverty line. And each year millions have been joining the ranks of the unemployed. I concede that the plans have given the country a strong industrial base. But rural areas have not enjoyed the glow of prosperity. Their problems continue to be a slur on our society. We have to lift these areas from the slough of poverty and from the curse of unemployment if we wish to be true to the Gandhiji's principles and ideals.

Our new priorities are very clear and realistic. We do not believe in fancies and utopias but in hard facts and progress according to our capacity to achieve, absorb and drain. [as received] Our programs of development conform to these ideas. The village will be the main focus of development. More than 43 percent of the outlay in the next plan will be on the rural programs which include irrigation, flood control, power, rural industries, minimum needs such as drinking water, medical aid and roads. We are taking significant measures to achieve full literacy and to reach the villager with simple modern technology that will give him higher yields and more work. The small man will have easier access to credit from banks and cooperatives. Land reforms will be speeded up. All these programs will generate employment on a large scale and markedly improve the rural economy. Nearly 50 million people will directly benefit--the unemployed getting jobs and the underemployed getting more work. We are going to reorganize and expand the village and small scale industries and keep the wheels of trade and industries moving towards the fulfillment of demand and growth. In all these programs we have kept in view the virtue and benefit of self-reliance. We have reduced foreign aid to the minimum and are going to develop to the maximum extent our indigenous sources and capability. Our commitment is not only to the programs but also to their timing.

My own approach is never to promise more than what we can do but try to do more than we promise. This plan with its emphasis on "work for the unemployed" will also allocate greater resources and responsibilities to the states. The country's economic effort has to be above the differences that unfortunately disfigure our body politic. National well-being should be held in trust by all citizens irrespective of their politics, caste or creed. It has to be a national effort. The states and center, people and government have to strive together to make it a success.

A life without want is what we aim for India--a clean life, a healthy and prudent life. The basic needs should be available for all in plenty but not those which may inebriate for the time being but ultimately destroy the individual. That is why Gandhi emphasized prohibition. Prohibition is not a fad or fancy as some people say. It is an essential part of the fight against poverty and the struggle for a peaceful domestic environment. It is a program by which women and children get a better share of the family income and life. Our commitment to the policy of prohibition is not aimed against any particular section of people but against an evil--an evil the consequences of which are written large on many faces and many homes.

In no other field did the emergency do more harm to the nation than in family planning. Its methods have discredited an essential and indispensable item of our national effort. It has brought shame to our administration. We have to retrieve this position and make up for the lost ground by persuasion and education as against ruthless compulsion. Our efforts are bearing fruit and in years to come we intend to intensively follow the family planning program in all seriousness with willing cooperation of the people for whom in the long run it would be a blessing.

The cause of the scheduled castes and tribes and minorities is dear to us. We yield to no one in our regard for their interest. We, along with the states, have afforded them due protection and care and attention. The chief ministers of the states concerned and I have made personal intervention in setting the matters right where they went wrong. But in many cases something more than mere caste disability is involved. Land disputes have been a feature of our measures for the implementation of land reforms and both have mingled together in the atrocities that have been tragically perpetrated. But we have brought matters under control. We have, however, not rested on our laurels. To watch and safeguard the interests of these communities we have established a commission for the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes and another for the minorities. These two commissions will be clothed with constitutional status and will thus be an essential part of the governing setup. We recognize, however, that it is necessary to identify socioeconomic disabilities and handicaps of the backward classes. We propose to appoint a special commission for this purpose which will suggest remedies for the removal of these disabilities and handicaps.

The world watched in dismay as the lamp of liberty flickered and looked like being snuffed out in our country. But when the people asserted themselves the world looked at us in admiration. On this initial advantage we have built a sturdy foundation of our foreign policy. It is a policy of nonalignment and friendship towards all, of extending the frontiers of freedom and bilateral or multilateral cooperation. It is a policy of watchful dedication to human rights and freedom of the seas.

In the last 12 months we have built bridges of understanding with all countries big or small in the Western Hemisphere, in our own situated far or near from Nepal and Bhutan to the United States, from the USSR, China and Japan down to Australia and New Zealand. [sentence as received] Today our country has more friends. I want all countries to feel assurance that they will find a steadfast friend in India always ready to foster peace and brotherhood among the nations of the world and work for fair play and justice in international disputes.

Brothers and sisters, I have tried to give you a brief account of what has been done by your government and what it intends to do in the future to fulfill the mandate given by you last year. It is now for you to assess our achievements and our plans for the future. We are determined to pursue our path with your continued support and cooperation. It is for you to sustain our faith and help us fulfill your hopes. Winter has left us and spring is with us. For us all let it be a spring of trust, confidence and strength. Jai Hind.

GOVERNMENT TO WITHDRAW PREVENTIVE DETENTION POWERS

BK231034Y Delhi General Overseas Service in English 1000 GMT 23 Mar 78 BK

[Text] The lower house of Parliament was officially informed today that the government has decided to withdraw the Code of Criminal Procedure Amendment Bill 1977 providing for preventive detention.

The home minister, Mr Charan Singh, amidst cheers from all sections of the house, said the government also proposes to bring forward a separate legislation for the repeal of the Maintenance of Internal Security Act 1971. The minister said that the government has come to this decision after taking into account certain misgivings expressed against the bill both in the house and outside. With the traumatic experience of the emergency still fresh in our minds, there is understandable apprehension in the public mind that powers of preventive detention could be misused by the executive notwithstanding the safeguards. There is also a feeling that the Janata Party, having received the people's mandate on the restoration of democracy and removal of curbs on civil liberties, should not have recourse to such extraordinary laws. The minister said the country can be governed with minimal restraints on the citizens if everyone exercises self-discipline and self-restraint.

PRC GOOD-WILL DELEGATION DEPARTS AFTER 16-DAY VISIT

BK231041Y Delhi General Overseas Service in English 1000 GMT 23 Mar 78 BK

[Text] The 12-member Chinese good-will delegation left Calcutta today for Hong Kong on its way back to China at the end of a 16-day visit to India. The leader of the delegation, Mr Wang Ping-nan, told newsmen at Calcutta airport that he believes their visit will strengthen friendship between the two countries.

PAKISTAN

HAQ SAYS GOVERNMENT CANNOT SPARE BHUTTO'S LIFE

BK241001Y Dacca Domestic Service in English 0835 GMT 24 Mar 78 BK

[Text] Pakistan's chief martial law administrator, Gen Ziaul Haq, has said that his government has no power to spare the life of former Prime Minister Mr Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto. In an interview with the British television he said justice will follow on its own course and no one is above the law. General Haq rejected the allegation that the present military government has influenced the court verdict. Meanwhile, the Greek prime minister, Mr Konstandinos Karamanlis, has appealed to the Pakistan Government to spare Bhutto's life.

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